PLEASANT

ADVENTURES

OF

GUSMAN,

OF ALFARACHE.

TAKEN FROM THE HISTORY OF HIS LIFE,

AND TRANSLATED FROM THE SPANISH INTO FRENCH,
BY *M. LE SAGE,*
And run through 26 Editions at Paris in a short Time.

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BY
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PLEASANT



ADVENTURES, &c.

CHAP. I.

Gusman sets off for Milan.—Of the hardy Enterprise which he and Sayavedra formed in that City.

THE joy of having gained a little money, and the agitation wherein the play had thrown my spirits, hindered me a long time from tasting the sweets of sleep. It was equally so with my unfortunate neighbour. He returned again from the city, and still without money. He was ashamed to appear in company, and full of confusion and rage, he withdrew to his chamber, and sighed most

bitterly. I was rejoiced to have so well revenged him to my own advantage.

The day following my two gamblers took good care to learn from the servants of the inn, if I was not gone; and were very glad when they heard I had in fact postponed my departure: they were afraid I would have escaped them, and I very sorry to leave them without having the rest of their money.

As soon as we had dined, the cards were brought. Then my two companions, in order to give me to understand that they wished to rip to the end of the bag, drew from their pockets a long purse each, full of good pistoles and doubloons of Spain. They threw some *fistfulls* on the table, saying to me, Here, Sir, behold what to take with you in the morning. They did not think they were telling the truth. I designed to lose at this sitting, but took care they should not win a great

deal. I managed so well, that, during the whole after dinner, I lost but forty crowns. The French officer, believing me in bad luck, proposed to me to play higher. No, said I, we have a long time to play yet; let us rest a little. It will be more proper to spend a part of the night at this holy exercise, and shall satisfy ourselves to the full after supper.

The hopes they had of ruining me, made them patiently wait until supper was over. On my side I had not a more charitable intention than theirs, which I soon made apparent, when we began again to box the cards. Fortune was at first against me; but, with my own address, and the assistance of my faithful squire, I obliged her at length to declare for me: These gentlemen soon got rid of their doubloons, which passed from their purses into mine. After which, quitting the play to go to

their respective chambers, they said that if I were in humour to give them another day, they would have, the day following, another sitting with me. I answered them that I wished for nothing better, and they would find me always disposed to give them the satisfaction they desired.

I retired to my chamber with my confidant, who was bouncing out of his skin with joy. He thought to undress me; I pushed him off: This is no time to take repose, said I; it is too late to lie down snugly between two blankets. I am determined to depart from this place, as soon as I can do it without noise. Sayavedra answered, that I did not remember, it seems, I had promised those gentlemen to play with them again. I have not forgotten, replied I, that I have made them this promise; but I am not fool enough to expose myself to any new misfortune in keeping

it. Let us not be insatiable. We have more than six hundred crowns. Let us content ourselves with this sum, and save ourselves as soon as we can. Have you hired the horses? Without doubt, answered he; I have paid their owner for the day's journey, who told me they should be ready at the first light. So much the better, replied I; we cannot get away soon enough. I will not believe my purse in safety, until I am ten good leagues from hence. My confidant left me to rest himself a few moments, very well satisfied with seeing ourselves charged with so considerable a booty.

As soon as he heard any noise in the inn, and that he believed the servants up, he returned to my chamber, where he found me ready to set off. I sent him to pay our landlord, and, when that was done, we quitted the inn, and speedily arrived at the place where the

horses were waiting for us. Scarcely were the gates of the city opened, but we already reached the country. I thought only of my escape, of getting over the ground, and crossing the country like lightning. I imagined all the blood-hounds of justice were let loose after me, to bring me back to the infernal prisons of Bologna, and oblige me to restore the money I had tricked my two players of. I turned my head every moment to see if any one was pursuing us, and when I perceived any horseman come faster than we, my heart palpitated; I changed colour, and was not myself until he passed us. So true it is, that every crime carries with it its own chastisement.

I became, however, by degrees more tranquil, and, when we had travelled four leagues, I felt no longer any fear. Then breaking silence, which I had observed until then, as well as my com-

panion, Sayavedra, I said, are you not tired of travelling like a * Carthusian friar? As for me, I am falling asleep. Tell me some story that will keep me awake and divert me. Signor Don Gusman, answered he, give me leave to tell you, that people, whose pockets are empty, are never calculated to tell funny stories; it only belongs to those who have full purses to be witty in their tales. I understand you, my friend, replied I, smiling, and assure you, that, at dinner, we will settle fair together, when I hope you will be satisfied with me.

The disinterestedness, true or false, which Sayavedra manifested, pleased me infinitely, and my design not being to frustrate him of the little retribution, which he merited by his signs that were so useful to me, I made him a present

* Silence is one of the obligations of that order of friars.

of twenty * pistoles, as soon as we arrived at a little inn, where we stopped to dine.

We mounted our horses again, after having made a very hearty dinner, though, in entering that tavern, I expected but very sorry fare. Very far from observing silence, as we had all the morning, the different adventures of Sayavedra became the subject of our entertainment along the road, even to Milan, where we both arrived gay and exulting, with dispositions on the alert to appropriate the property of our neighbours.

We employed the three first days in walking the streets, in traversing with my eyes the different merchandizes with which the shops were ornamented, without yet thinking of putting my talents of adventure to work.

* A pistole is worth about eighteen shillings and sixpence English currency.

As we were crossing the exchange one morning, a young man, tolerably well dressed, happened to accost Sayavedra, who was walking behind me. I was still walking on, and had already got an hundred paces before them, ere I took notice of them. I considered very attentively the young knave, with whom my confident had stopped, and discovered in him features so expressively sharping, as to give me plenty to think of.

Their conversation lasted more than a quarter of an hour. After which the young man took leave of my confident, who came to join me with a pausing look, which by no means tended to remove the suspicion I had already formed. I prepared myself to hear what he would say on this rencounter, which gave me so much uneasiness. Still, however great my desire was to make him speak on that subject, he

kept obstinately silent, and remained buried in his meditations. I kept also silence myself until after dinner. Then seeing myself alone with him in my chamber, and not being able to resist my curiosity any longer; Mr. Sayavedra, said I smiling, may one, without appearing to you indiscreet, ask you who that young man is, with whom you were in such great chat this morning. I think I have seen him at Rome. Is not his name Mendoza?—No, Sir, answered he, he is called Aguilera, and I assnre you he justifies his name well; for he is an eagle on occasions, when there is any employment for talons. He is a good companion, has wit, writes a good hand, knows arithmetic to a miracle, and understands how to make double and triple accompts to perfection. He is actually projecting a scheme that will make his fortune, if he succeed. He has proposed to me to enter

into the plot, and offers me half the profit. I told him, I should undertake nothing without informing you; he is to come here this afternoon, and will discover to you the whole project, and if there be any thing to correct in his plan, you, I trust, will perfect it.

Aguilera soon arrived. Sayavedra introduced him to me. We saluted each other with a great deal of civility. This Aguilera was a lad of good shape, and appeared to have some judgment and penetration. He confirmed to me all that my confident had told me before, and detailed to me in a manner very pleasant, some exploits they had performed together. He afterwards informed me, that having come to Milan with the hope of making some lucky hit there, he had found means to get into the service of a rich banker, in whose house he lived those six months,

in quality of clerk; that he had by his punctuality and fidelity gained the confidence of his patron, waiting until he found an opportunity to rob him; that a very good one now presented itself; but that he had need of a second person, and that in meeting with Sayavedra, he had looked upon him as a man dropped from Heaven for that purpose, being so well acquainted more than once with his refinement in scheming. I asked him, if his design was of a very difficult execution. Not very, answered he. You shall judge of it yourself. The banker has laid up in his strong box a few days back, a large Chamois purse, in which there are a thousand fine pistoles. I will take them off some Sunday morning, whilst my master is hearing mass; I will join Sayavedra at the post-stage, who shall have two horses hired. We will set off in an instant, and spur our Rosinantes so

vigorously, that we will be very far from the city before the banker perceives the copious bleeding his strong box will have met with.

After having listened very attentively to Aguilera, I told him his project was very delicate, that a lad known in the city for a banker's clerk, might meet some person, who, surprised to see him on a post horse, and suspecting him to have played some unlucky prank, would not fail to run to his master's house, to give him information of it; that the banker having returned from mass, would discover immediately that he was robbed, the report of which would soon spread all over the city, and very soon it would be publicly known that Aguilera had taken post-horses; that his master would instantly have him pursued by people better mounted, who would follow his route, and from whom he could not possibly

escape. I represented to him still some other inconveniencies, which made him see clearly, that his design was very badly conceived. He agreed with me at length, and moreover told me that he would at all events execute it, since he could not otherwise do it. He sleeps in the room, where his money and papers are, and there is no other cabinet.

Although he should be siill more sedentary and more vigilant, replied I, one could deliver him of his Chamois purse, without exposing himself to the danger, which you would brave so rashly. Faith, gentlemen, if you know no more than that, you are yet but apprentices in your profession. I will shew you that a superior genius has a good deal more insight than yours. I charge myself, if you wish it, with the management of this enterprise, and without involving you in the misfor-

tune I may experience. If fortune prove contrary, I will answer for the thousand pistoles, provided they are eight days hence in the strong box. Sayavedra and his friend began to laugh at this discourse, which caused in them as much joy, as if they had the Chamois purse already in their hands. They thanked me for the offer I made them, and let me willingly conduct this project of importance: well persuaded, particularly Sayavedra, that I would not speak to them after this manner, if I had not been as if fully assured of the event.

By what means, said I, do you pretend to get the Chamois purse out of the strong box? You have not the key of it. No, eertainly, answered he. My patron intrusts it with no one, only when I am with him in his cabinet, and that whilst he is writing, any one comes to ask payment of a bill of ex-

change, he throws me the key to take out a bag, the number of which he indicates to me, and whilst I am reckoning the money, he has one eye on what he is writing, and the other on what I am doing. As that is the case, replied I, it will be very hard to take the impression of that key. A good deal less than you think, answered Agilera. I have (God be thanked) a very sly hand; I promise to bring you the impression of the key of the strong box, and even, if you think proper, the key of a little chest of drawers, where my honest citizen locks up his books of accompts, and the money he employs for his ordinary expences. At these words, which made me leap with joy, I told him, if he could get those two impressions, we would be still surer of our aim.

I forgot not to inform myself of the situation of the cabinet, the kind of

stuff the bags were made of, and the lables with which they were distinguished. In a word, of all the particulars both within and without the banker's strong box. I made a circumstantial memorial of them, which the *faithful* clerk dictated to me.

Every thing succeeded according to our evil intentions. I put in practice therefore all those first-rate tricks, of which I was unluckily a perfect master. Aguilera followed identically as I had ordered him, and by the most famous knavery, that one could imagine, I brought about at length that the banker was condemned to deliver to me the thousand pistoles, which he had in his strong box, and I pretended to have deposited in his bank.

As soon as I saw myself in possession of money so villainously acquired, I could have wished to be far enough from Milan. But as a too percipitate

departure might appear suspicious, I resolved to put it off for some days. Sayavedra was itching to be fingering the pistoles, and taking them sometimes for pieces of gold, which he saw in a dream, he knew not whether he was asleep or awake. Then thinking of the stratagem I had invented, to make so fine a blow, he elevated me above all the thieves in the universe. Friend Sayavedra, said I, it is too much to boast of a turn so very common. What chiefly merits praise alone, is to know how to shun the danger in flying; for to introduce one's self into an open house, steal a morning gown, and receive an hundred lashes for the theft, is the easiest thing in the world.

We passed the rest of the day in the inn, discoursing with a great deal of gaiety. When night was come, we both went out to find Aguilera, who was waiting for us at an appointed ren-

dezvous. As soon as he saw us arrive, he began to laugh, and we followed his example. He did not forget to compliment me on my abilities. After which, the question was to share our booty. I drew from my pocket a large purse, in which were three hundred pistoles; and gave it to him, saying, I was determined to give as much more to Sayavedra, and that I would keep the remainder for myself, it being very just that he who had laboured the most in that affair, and played the highest game, should have the greatest part of the prize. My two associates instantly agreed, and assured me that they were quite satisfied. The division being made, having nothing more to stop us at our rendezvous, we bid adieu to the honest clerk, and returned to our inn, where we employed our time after supper in reckoning our money. What a subject of ravishment for me, to find

myself worth more than seven thousand franks, without speaking of what I had won at Bologna. I never saw myself so rich, and remembered no longer of having been robbed at Sienna.

Walking the streets the following day, having cast my eyes by chance into an ironmonger's shop, I remarked a gilt copper chain of very nice workmanship, which I took for pure gold. I asked the merchant how much it weighed. He answered me, smiling, that all is not gold that glitters, and that if I had a mind to buy it, he would give a good bargain. I was tempted to have it. I gave him what he asked, and took it into my possession. Sayavedra, who was with me, could not refrain from laughing, at seeing me make such a purchase, and when we were out of the shop, he said to me :—Signor Don Gusman, you have a mind, I

believe, to make some one pay dearer for this chain, than it has cost you. That may happen, said I, and with this laudable design, I am going to carry it to a goldsmith, to have one of pure gold made to the same fashion and size. I applied to an able tradesman, to whom I was directed. He made one so like to mine, that no one could distinguish one from the other by their respective jingle.

At length I set off from Milan, with those two trinkets, and the quills I had plucked from the wing of Signor Jerome Plati. I said in the inn, before my departure, that I was going to Venice; but instead of taking the road, I turned without any noise into that of Pavia. I stopped some time in that last city, to make there some necessary preparations for the journey I intended making to Genoa, if I ever found myself in a situation to appear there without

making my kindred blush. I wished to play the part of a young Spanish abbot returning from Rome. I bought for that purpose some very fine stuffs, of which the most celebrated tailor made me a long cloak and cassock; I got black turkey leather shoes with red heels, with silk stockings, and all the rest of a prelate's dress. I moreover ordered Sayavedra to provide two large baggage chests, and when all was ready I took to the road in a litter, conducted by a muleteer, with my squire on horseback, a new servant on foot, and another muleteer, who led a mule laden with luggage. It was in this fine equipage that Genoa again saw the same Gusman, whom it had seen six years before in a very miserable situation.

CHAP. II.

Gusman arrives at Genoa. The gracious Reception his Relatives gave him.—He gives his Relations a sumptuous Entertainment, and makes them pay the Reckoning.

We put up at the White Cross, which was the best inn in the city. It was already night, and as my squire had set off before us to dispose the innkeeper to receive in his house an abbot of the first quality, I found every one in motion at the inn. A part of the servants were at the door with *flambeaux*, and their master, after Sayavedra had helped me to alight from my litter, conducted me to the state room.

The inn was then full of persons of rank, who were not a little curious to know who I was, and my new servant, well instructed by Sayavedra, told every one who questioned him on the

subject, that I was called My Lord Abbot, Don Juan de Gusman, the son of a nobleman of Genoa, married at Seville. I did not leave my room the first day. I aped the abbot of importance fatigued with his journey from Rome, and employed myself in preparing every thing necessary to shew myself the day following in Genoa, under the form of a bishop. Whilst I was thus busy in those decorations with my faithful squire, who not knowing yet the motive of this metamorphosis, said to me:—You must, my dear master, have began to distrust me, since you make a mystery of the design you are meditating at present. No, my friend, answered I, you have always my confidence; I am going to impart it to you.

I have told you at Milan, how my father, a nobleman of Genoa, married at Seville, a lady of the house of Gusman, the name of which I have as-

sumed. I have even related to you the history of my life, without descending to trifling particulars; but I have never told you of an adventure, the bare remembrance of which makes me form the enterprise I am going to discover to you. It is now nearly seven years back since I left Toledo in very good equipage to come to Italy, in order to see my relations. I spared no money on the road, so that I arrived at Genoa in a very miserable condition. That however did not hinder me from presenting myself before some of the family, and among others one of my uncles, who received me very badly, or rather treated me so cruelly, that I swore to avenge myself on them, if ever fortune should offer a proper opportunity. I am determined to keep my oath, since I can even now. I wish to rob my relations: it is the only vengeance I have an inclination to wreak on them. This

is the intention, that makes me borrow this disguise, which surprises you so much. Besides that, it inspires respect, I think it more proper than any other to render me unknown to those eyes, which had seen me but *en passant*, although the change which has been made in me since that time, might remove from me every apprehension of being known again. Let us prepare, my dear Sayavedra, to play some fine scheme on my family. I am stimulated to it by a just resentment, and by interest. My confidant answered, I had but to command him; that he would follow exactly the instructions I should give him. We both concerted what we were to do, and behold the conduct I pursued to arrive at my object. I dressed myself the day following in my cassock and long cloak, and looking at myself in a glass, I appeared to myself quite another man. Without

vanity, I had not a bad mien. Although I should not have had the talent of acting well all kinds of personages, I had seen at Rome so many fine models of abbots of consequence, I could not have failed to copy them exactly. As for me, I took up to a miracle their best airs; I knew how to exalt my chin, to tuck up my cassock and cloak fashionably, so as to let one leg be seen, which was none of the worst made I assure you, especially when rigged out with a silk stocking, and smart shoe, to wear my hat in a manner as gallant as modest, to stare at people without seeming to fasten a look on them, and to sweeten my voice when speaking.

I walked the streets above an hour, returning the respectful homages I received, as an abbot accustomed to such honors. After which I returned to the inn, where the landlord told me dinner

was ready, and to ask if I would be graciously pleased to permit some persons of quality to eat at my table; I answered it would be a singular pleasure to me. A moment after, entering the dining-room, I saw four gentlemen arrive, who saluted me with respect. I returned their salute very civilly, and remarking that dinner was laid, sat down with assurance in the place of honor, and afterwards besought the gentlemen to sit down. The conversation was at first very serious on my account. I perceived it, and assuming myself the first a gay air, to give those gentlemen to understand that I was not so much a devil as I was black, told two or three pleasant little stories, which excited some of the company to follow my example.

Those gentlemen amused themselves generally after dinner playing cards, and sometimes after supper. They

played very high, and as men of honor. I willingly passed away an hour looking at them, after which I withdrew. They would indeed have wished that I had taken an inclination to play with them, believing me a richer abbot than an able player; though they might very well know, that there are some very fine sharpers in cassocks and long sleeves. I testified a repugnance to play, and it was not until we were a little more familiar together, I half consented to take a hand of cards with them. When they saw me yield half way, they redoubled their entreaties, and I seemed to comply at last thro' pure complaisance. I did play long and only for a trifle, without employing Sayavedra, nor even all my own skill. So what I could lose was nothing, and what I could gain, would not be worth pocketing; I therefore sometimes left it for the cards, and at other times gave

it to those gentlemen's servants, or to my own. I acquired by this conduct the reputation of a generous nobleman, which caused, when I sat down to play, the party-coloured gentry to be sure to place themselves behind me.

One day having won about forty pistoles, I took up twenty-five in my hand, and abandoned the rest to those who were round me. Then turning round to a Captain of a Galley, who was among the number of the pass-volans, I told him quite low, slipping privately the money into his hand, which I had in mine: You have been too long in Spain to be ignorant that a gentleman, who has seen play, and has taken part in the fortune of a player, will not refuse a small mark of gratitude, which he wishes to give him. You would use me so in like circumstances. He appeared a little confused at my action. But there are times

in life when one pistole is worth a thousand. My officer was then so moneyless, that the pleasure he felt in seeing a shower of gold tumble suddenly on him, got the better of his shame. Nevertheless, in spite of his misery, I know not whether he was more sensible of the benefit, or of the manner with which it was conferred on him. He wished to testify it by his discourse, which I twice interrupted by asking him some questions, respecting his voyages. I besought him even to come every day to dine and sup with me; for he seldom dined at my inn, and in quitting him requested his friendship.

As he was known for a very honorable character, he frequented the nobility, and made there the best figure the appointments of a Captain of a Galley could permit him to make, which indeed are very moderate at

Genoa. To mend the matter, he loved play, and though he was very unlucky, he could not refrain from embarking in it, when he found a crown in his pocket. This predominant passion was accompanied by an irresistible propensity to the ladies, which alone would be sufficient to ruin him, if he were as rich as Crœsus. He was called Favello, a name which a lady, whom he had formerly loved, bestowed on him, and for whom he still preserved a fond recollection. He related to me himself some days after this story, which I could not hear without sighing, and being moved in calling to mind an intrigue which I had myself at Florence. The good qualities of the Captain were not the sole cause of that little gallantry, and the civilities I shewed him. I will avow it to you, reader, though I must appear in your opinion falsely generous. I knew the galleys were

soon to depart for Barcelona, and with the intention I had of profitting of this opportunity in order to pass over to Spain, after having cozened my cousins, the friendship of Captain Favello was too useful for me to neglect acquiring it.

In fact, the day following, when leaving my bed, he came to render me his devoirs, and invited me to a coasting entertainment, which I gladly accepted. I was conducted after dinner to his galley, where I was received with all honors that would be paid the Pope himself, or the Doge of Genoa. We sailed out from the harbour to view the beautiful country seats and villas situated along the sea-coast, and which formed the most elegant spectacle that ever ravished the human sight. Our officer, who was a Genoese by birth, and spoke freely what he thought, did not content himself with naming to

me the different proprietors of those superb mansions, he still drew very malicious pictures of their owners. Among the persons he least spared, one of my relations was brought on the carpet. I began to laugh: Softly, said I, Mr. Captain, I demand quarters for that man. You do not know that I am one of that family. Of that family! cried he, with surprise mingled with confusion. How is that? I will tell you, answered I. My father was a nobleman of Genoa; a large bankruptcy, which he underwent, obliged him to pass over into Spain. He established himself at Seville, where he brought up his losses by marrying a lady of the house of Gusman, whose name I bear preferable to his for two reasons: the first, in order to secure a succession, which, without that, would have escaped me; and the second, because, being at least as much the son

of my mother as my father, I thought I might choose either of the two names I thought more honourable.

You imagine, replied Favello, that you are speaking of a circumstance of which I have no knowledge. Pardon me, if you please: I know very intimately two of your cousins, who have more than once conversed with me respecting your father. They have told me that he was a man of great genius; that he had been taken by an Algerine pirate, and, after having recovered his liberty, through the love a lady of Algiers had conceived for him, went to seek his correspondent at Seville, and that there having placed his affections on a lady of quality, married her. Are you then the son of that illustrious slave? At your service, replied I, still laughing. Do you know, continued he, that my Lord Don Bertrand, your father's eldest brother, is *full of days?*

He is a good old man, who walks not now but with a stick. He has never wished to marry, and is one of the richest noblemen in Genoa. You tell me what I did not know, said I, for I have never seen him, and my mother has never had any correspondence by letters with him or any of the family. I am astonished, added he, that you could be until now without knowing him. Your relations are assuredly the first noblemen in this country, and I know not what can hinder you from seeing them. What do you wish I should do? answered I. That I should go declare my name before people who know me not, and who will think themselves justifiable to doubt what a man shall tell them, whose simple word is the only guarantee of his sincerity. No, no, I have no need of them, and ask nothing of them. Let us remain as we are. Although they should even

know that I am in this city, being a stranger, I would expect them to make the first advances. You are in the right of it, said our officer; but have patience until morning; I will give them information of your arrival. I am persuaded, that as soon as I shall have told them, they will think it a pleasure to render you those civilities they so justly owe you. I replied, I'm resolved not to declare myself one of their family, unless they appear disposed to meet the declaration.

Whilst we were discoursing thus together, Favello caused to be laid before me a collation composed of beautiful fruits and sweet-meats, the best that could be got. He had taken care to have it previously prepared for me, and employed for that purpose a good part of the pistoles I had made him a present of. Night, which was approaching, obliged us to put into harbour. We

landed, and I brought my captain with me to the inn, where we supped with the gentlemen who lodged there. After the repast, they proposed to me to play again, saying they had at heart the forty pistoles I had won from them the day before, and that it was just I should give them satisfaction. I consented, and feeling myself in a train of winning, said to Favello, At least, Mr. Captain, do not forget that we go halves. The Captain answered, smiling, that he believed me so lucky in every thing, he applauded himself in being my partner. Fortune, in fact, favoured me from the beginning of the play to the end. I won a hundred pistoles, which I shared with our galley-officer; which this time gave him so much the more pleasure, as it cost his pride nothing. It is thus I disposed him by degrees to an incapacity of refusing me the favour I expected from him.

He failed not the day following to go to the houses of my relations, and informed them that my Lord Abbot, Don Gusman, was arrived at Genoa. You may well imagine he drew a fine picture of my lordship, and boasted of my merit and generosity, since after dinner they were seen to come to my inn in well-starched ruffs, with their black velvet cloaks gracefully hung on their shoulders. My major-domo, who was well instructed in all he had to do, received them at the door of my lodging, and conducted them to my chamber, where I advanced gravely to the entrance, saluting them with a great deal of civility. Two of them appeared at first one after another, the sons of a senator who died about six years before, and who was my father's brother. Then a third cousin followed, son to an aunt of mine still living. They overwhelmed me with compliments, and offered

me their houses, interest, and purses, because Favello had given them to understand I did not want them. But although they might not have taken me for a very opulent abbot, what they remarked in my chamber would have been capable to give them a splendid opinion of me:—I had negligently spread on a table my gold chain, several other jewels, and every thing precious I possessed, with the casket of Milan quite opened, in which they might plainly perceive a part of the pistoles it contained.

My uncle, old buff the bachelor, and chief of the family, arrived the last. It was particularly against this old scoundrel all my spleen was levelled. He supported on a great cane his tottering frame, and walked with difficulty. I found in him no longer that venerable air who had so much pleased me once: On the contrary, all my soul was up in arms against him. The sight

of this old ape, full of malice, made me shudder, as the presence of a murderer opens the wounds of the man whom he has murdered. I thought I beheld him with his sham devils, ready to toss me again in the blanket. I failed not, however, in spite of the hatred which I had for him, to receive him still better than my cousins, who, going out a moment after he came in, left the place clear to him, through respect. The old man began to testify to me the joy he felt to see the son of a brother, who was always so dear to him; then looking at me from head to foot, he told me I resembled my father very much, and that it was very glorious for the family to have so proper a scion to render it more illustrious. He complained afterwards that I had not come to lodge with him, where there were more suitable apartments than an inn for a man of my character and quality. I lavished

on him acknowledgements, accompanied with the most lively demonstrations of sensibility. After that, I told him my cousins had offered me their houses also, which I could not think of accepting, not being willing to incommode any of my relations for the little time I had to stay at Genoa, where I had only come but to inform myself of the state of our family, as well for my own satisfaction as for that of my mother, who charged me with the inquiry.

These last words gave occasion to Don Bertrand to ask some news of my mother and her children. I answered that I was her only son, and spun out a very fine eulogium of my mother. My uncle, impatient to tell me what I knew already as well as himself, interrupted me in saying. My nephew, I cannot avoid telling you an adventure, which happened us about six or seven years ago. There appeared in Genoa a

little rogue almost naked ; he traversed the whole city from one end to another, through every street, lane, and alley, proclaiming to every one who wished to listen to him, that he was the son of your father; and this beggar, who had well the air of what he was, flattered himself that some of our family would be credulous enough to believe him on his word, and good enough to have compassion on his misery. I sought him with the intention of avenging the dishonour he did us, and had the good fortune to meet him. I drew him to my house with kind words, and especially by a promise I made him of introducing him the day following to a man who would not fail to render him some service. When he was in my house, I questioned him, and judged by his answers, that he was a little knavish vagabond ; so he paid well altogether for his peeping ; I saw he was dying

with hunger, and sent him without any supper to sleep in a magnificent apartment, where he was well tossed in a blanket the whole night by huge masked devils, who twirled him in the air into all the distortions of a mountebank's tumbler.

In speaking after this manner the cursed old scoundrel laughed with all his might, whilst at the bottom of my soul I felt that the recital and the pleasure he took in giving it, were driving me to madness. Nevertheless, I dissembled, and told him I found that adventure very pleasant. I am only sorry for one thing, replied my uncle; it is because he disappeared in the morning, and is still running about with the same story. I would have pushed my vengeance farther, the better to punish the little wretch for his presumption in calling himself one of our relations. At this. Genoese sentiment I changed the

discourse, and a quarter of an hour after, the old dotard got up to take his leave; I accompanied him to the street door, doing him all the honours due to the eldest brother of my father.

After dinner, I charged Sayavedra to seek out in the city four good large boxes of the same size, and buy them for me. Whilst he was acquitting himself of this commission, Favello came to see me, in order to give me an account of the conversations he had with my cousins on my account. He assured me the whole family was charmed with my person, above all, Signor Don Bertrand my uncle: this good old man, continued he, told me that he really thought he had seen and heard his dear, dear brother, so much resemblance did he find between the father and the son: that it is with regret he has seen you embrace an ecclesiastical profession, and that he would recommend it to

you, to quit the cassock and marry one of his nieces by the mother's side; that indeed this girl had very little fortune, but he was resolved to leave her a splendid one, because he had for her a particular friendship; finally, the Captain protested to me, that my uncle had conceived for me a great deal of esteem and tenderness.

I went to return the visit the morning following, first to Don Bertrand, who, in the interview we had together, told me that being an only son, I ought to think rather of supporting my house, than of consecrating myself to a state, which would deprive it of one of its fairest branches. He afterwards named the person, whom he had a mind to choose for my wife. In order to amuse him, I seemed to shew no disinclination to comply with his wishes, and finished my visit in praying him to come the day following to dine with

me. He wished at first to refuse, and to excuse himself on account of his great age, which did not permit him to assist at banquets. Nevertheless when I represented to him, that there would be at dinner but relations and Captain Favello, the common friend of all the family, he suffered himself to be allured, and promised to be of the party, to testify, said he to me, the extreme consideration and attachment he had to a dear nephew, whom heaven, in its gracious mercy, had sent him. I visited after that my cousins one after another, and they gave me also their word to come and dine with me. There was no more wanting but to cause a magnificent dinner to be prepared. I addressed myself to this effect to the innkeeper, who assured me I might depend on him for the care of regaling my guests, and that he would engage to prepare a feast where abundance

and delicacy would be seen equally to reign.

My major-domo, who arrived at the inn, whilst I was speaking to the landlord, told me he had bought four boxes completely matchable. I wished to see them. He conducted me to where they were, and I was very well pleased with them. He asked me what I intended to do. I answered that he had but to follow me, and he would be very soon informed of it. I ordered him to take our little casket under his arm, and brought him with me to one of the richest goldsmiths in Genoa. I proposed to this merchant to lend me for twenty-four hours some silver dishes and plates, paying him a lawful profit, and depositing in his hands the full value of the plate in cash. The goldsmith accepted the proposal. We agreed for the sum, which he wished to have for the loan, and choosing the

plate, I was pleased to have, I paid down from nine to ten thousand franks in good pistoles to the goldsmith as security. After which, I bid Sayavedra to go fetch the two boxes which he knew, to put the plate in them himself, and have them brought to my lodging, which was executed with all the diligence this faithful squire was capable of.

All my relations assembled then the day following at my inn about noon. My landlord, who piqued himself on being an excellent cook, gave me to understand, that he was effectually perfect in the difficult art of making good ragoûts. He dressed them so deliciously, that my cousins, and even my uncle avowed that, in all their lives, they had never eaten better. If they had not expected to have made such good cheer, they were still much more surprised, when they saw a side-board

finely ornamented with plate, and remarked that the dishes and plates were of the same metal. They could not refrain from telling me, that a traveller ran very great risk in carrying with him such abundance of plate, and particularly in Italy, where one is apt to meet robbers at every step he walks. The good man Don Bertrand, whom all this profusion of silver had made think the same thing, supported their opinion. It is your own fault, my dear nephew, said he, you might very well dispense with lodging at an inn in a city, where you have relations such as we. I agree it is the most famous inn of Genoa, but the best in the world is nothing to the house of one's kindred. You are young, and I wish to apprise you as a man who has some experience, that you ought not to depend on the goodness of your locks, because inn-keepers, their wives, children, and servants, have always

two or three keys for every apartment. If you believe me, continued he, since you refuse to lodge in my house, send at least this very day your plate and jewels there. They shall be safe for you in my cabinet until your departure, if they were worth a million of gold.

I gave a thousand thanks to my uncle for his obliging inquietude, and feigning to despise the fear of being robbed, told him, that in leaving Rome, I thought proper to leave in the hands of our ambassador what I had most precious, and that with regard to the plate, although it was something embarrassing to a traveller, I was not sorry to have brought it with me, it being, if necessary required, as easy to be disposed of as jewels or trinkets. All the family appeared to give into this reasoning; and as I happened to name our ambassador, my cousins began to speak of

that minister. They told me, they had seen him, when he was passing through Genoa to Rome. Then in order to prove to them that I was very intimate with the ambassador, I shewed them the portrait he had made me a present of, which persuaded them that the ambassador and I were upon the most intimate footing.

Don Bertrand, still occupied with the danger my plate ran in the inn, returned once more to the charge, and I was obliged to tell him in order to satisfy him, that I would have all my plate carried to his house after dinner in the two boxes I pointed at, in which I was accustomed to keep it locked up. We changed the discourse, and the conversation fell on the marriage. My uncle, thereupon addressing me, said, It is at your age, my dear nephew, one ought to marry, and not in his old age, when he is apt to be the cause and in-

strument of orphans. He then represented to me all the disadvantages of an ecclesiastical life, and exhausted himself afterwards in praising the young lady, whom he wished I would marry. She is my niece, by the mother side. She is of noble blood, and a beauty that amply makes up for fortune: moreover she has a mother, who will cherish you as the apple of her eye, you and all your children.

Seeing the old man desired so ardently this marriage, I manifested no apparent disposition contradictory to his wishes. How seducing are you, my dear uncle! said I. I feel that you are giving me a distaste to an ecclesiastical life, and am certain that in receiving a wife from your hands, I shall be perfectly happy. However permit me, I beseech you, to represent, that I have already a benefice of ten thousand livres a year, and expect another of fif-

teen thousand, which some relations of my mother, who are very powerful at court, have given me room to hope for. It will be truly gratifying to me, in changing my condition, to have those two handsome gifts to bestow on the children of my cousins. They all applauded the idea, and gave me in advance the most cordial acknowledgments. About the end of the repast, Don Bertrand asked Captain Favello, if he had received orders for his departure. Yes, answered the officer, and we are to sail in three days for Barcelona. Every one is beginning to put already on board what he wishes to carry there. I was rejoiced to hear this news, which gave me to understand I had no time to lose. As soon as dinner was over, I ordered my major-domo to lock up my plate and casket in the two boxes, and to have them carried to my uncle's. All that was executed

in less than an hour, and before my relations, whilst I kept up the conversation with them. We found not the two boxes wherein the plate was put, but the two others that we had filled the evening before with bags of sand nearly the same weight, and which Sayavedra had very artfully exchanged.

Captain Favello returned that night to the inn. He testified to me his grief on account of being obliged to separate from me. It is not, said I, a thing so very certain that we will quit each other so soon. Perhaps we will be longer together than you are aware of. He paused a moment on what I happened to say, and asked me if I had a mind to pass over to Spain. It is, answered I, what I wish not to conceal from you, whose prudence and discretion I know so well. Learn that the pleasure of seeing my relatives has less drawn me to Genoa, than the desire of

revenging an offence, that a Genoese my rival has given me at Rome. It was not necessary to say any more to Favello to engage him to offer me his services. Tell me, said he with agitation, the name of the scoundrel who has offended you, and I ask but twenty-four hours to satisfy your resentment. Captain, replied I, I am indebted to you for entering so warmly into my interests; but you judge very badly of me, if you believe I want either strength or courage to avenge myself. Beside that, I will tell you, I know where my enemy dwells, and am sure of my blow. The favour I expect from you, is to permit me to have my baggage privately carried on board your galley, on the eve previous to her leaving the port. I even wish, for more than one reason, that my relatives be ignorant of my departure, and I demand this secret of you.

As for the secret, replied the officer, I promise you it shall be inviolable. Then returning to my affair of honour; by G—d, pnrsued he, I am very much mortified, that in the only one opportunity I shall have to testify my zeal for you, you refuse to employ me. I embraced him, and in order to console him, said, he would have opportunities enough on board his galley to manifest his frendship. Upon that we separated, both of us penetrated with affectionate sentiments for each other. The day following, very early, I sent back all the plate to the goldsmith's, by my servants, who brought me in return my pistoles which lay there in pawn. I had scarcely placed them again in their casket, when one of my cousins arrived to tell me, that my uncle Don Bertrand, expected me to dine with him the day following. I failed not to go, and found all the family assembled there. We

sat gayly to table, and kept up a very pleasant conversation. About the middle of the repast, my major-domo, as we had both previously settled between ourselves, entered the dining-room, and bringing me a note; Colonel Don Antonio, said he, has been at the inn to look for you, and not finding you there, has charged me to deliver you this letter. I opened it without any ceremony, and read it loud enough, in order that my uncle, who sat near me, might hear it. It contained the following words:

"I am to be married to-morrow. I reckon implicitly, that this festivity will not be performed without you. If you refuse to be of the party, I break with you for ever. This is not all; you have shewn me some handsome jewels of your mother's; I beseech you to lend me them. My mistress has not dared to bring her own to this country. We will keep them but two days, and

shall take particular care of them. I flatter myself you will confer this obligation on your friend, &c.

Don ANTONIO de MENDOCE."

After the reading of this epistle, I assumed a troubled and mortified air. I seemed buried in thought. Then turning to Sayavedra; you do not know, said I, what Don Antonio wants of me: he requests my jewels to decorate his wife on the day of her nuptials. You know my diamonds are in Rome at the ambassador's. Go, tell the Colonel I have them not, and that I am in despair for the disappointment. Sir, replied my steward, he will think it an evasion, and that you refuse to lend them. He will be wrong in that, said I; but however, sooner than give him room to imagine it, I would rather hire some jewels. My uncle said, why should you put yourself to cost to borrow what you can have for nothing?

Do you think we have not as fine jewels as those that sell them, and that we are not disposed to oblige you in every thing that is agreeable to you? This cavalier being a friend of yours, your relations will take a pleasure in obliging him. Yes, certainly, cried I, Mendoce is one of my best friends. He is a man of rank, who has rendered me essential service at Rome, and to whom I am indebted for my acquaintance with the Ambassador of Spain. This Colonel, whose regiment is at Milan, has gained the affections of a rich widow, who in spite of some relations that oppose their union, wishes to espouse him. They are both come to Genoa, in order to consummate their marriage with more liberty. He is an officer of the nicest honour; though you should lend him jewels to the amount of an hundred thousand franks, you need not be under the smallest uneasiness. Be it as

it will, interrupted my uncle, if he should wish to see his wife covered from head to foot with jewels, he shall have that satisfaction.

Charmed that he bit the hook so well, I told him with transport: Truly, my dear uncle, you are too generous, and I ought to be apprehensive of abusing your goodness. No compliments, my nephew, answered he with precipitation; it is with a good heart I offer you my diamonds. In order to prove it, I will this moment go bring you the most splendid you have probably ever seen. In finishing these words he got up from the table, went to his closet, from whence he returned with a box of jewels, which he put into my hands, and in which there were jewels to the amount of seven or eight thousand franks. My three cousins seeing the good man act in this manner with me, would not shew

themselves less generous. They all promised to lend me some, and truly the morning following, very early, they brought to my inn nearly the same amount of jewels. The most avaricious of the three came the last, and when we had discoursed together a long time, he made the conversation fall on my benefice. He told me, that if I had a mind to dispose of it, and was in a humour to resign it to any of his children, perferably to those of his cousins, a present of a thousand pistoles should accompany his thanks. I answered, that his eldest son being older than any of his nephews, I thought him the most proper to possess my benefice; but I was not a man to sell it, and having obtained it for nothing, I intended to bestow it after the same manner. I perceived my answer did not displease *this* cousin.

My steward arrived at that moment.

He had under his arm a small casket, in which was my gold chain: Do you wish, said he to me, that I should go where you bid me? You should rather, replied I, have returned ere this. Remember only, before you apply to a goldsmith, to inquire in the neighbourhood for some honest man, upon whom one may with safety depend. If you be well assured of that point, get him to weigh my chain, and return to let me know how much it weighs. Although my cousin had already seen it, he had an inclination to consider it again, and admired as much the workmanship, as the beauty of the gold. Then turning to Sayavedra, My friend, pursued he, tell my servant, whom you will find below, to conduct you to my goldsmith, who lives a few paces from this, and will tell you in conscience what the chain is worth. My squire was not long absent. I asked him how

much the goldsmith valued it at; six hundred and fifty-five crowns, replied Sayavedra. Very well, said I, you will have but to return to his house to request he will lend me six hundred crowns on that pledge; I'll be obliged to play veiy high at the marriage of my friend the Colonel's; I do not wish to be short of money. My cousin assured me that in two hours at farthest the six hundred crowns should be with me. Then taking the casket from Sayavedra, I opened it in order to let my honest relative see the chain was in it; afterwards having shut it up, I gave it to his trusty valet, who brought me an hour after the six hundred crowns. Unfortunately for this cousin, my major-domo, in bringing it back from the goldsmith's, under his cloak, had artfully drawn out the gold chain, and laid the other in its place.

That night Favello came to sup

with me. He told me it was time I should strike the blow I had meditated, and that I should the evening following sleep on board, as the galleys were to sail before sun-rise. That will exactly do, answered I; my affairs shall be settled in less than twenty-four hours, and I will not fail to go on board to-morrow evening. On your side, send, if you please, some of your people about night-fall to carry my boxes; my departure shall on that account be the more secret. The Captain promised me he would, and took his leave of me a little after supper. We packed up our best effects in our two large boxes, and filled with rags and trash of every description the two, which were a match for those that my thrice honoured uncle so piously conserved in his safe closet. A quarter of an hour before night, four men, who served on board Favello's galley, came to carry my two large cof-

fers on board. We left the other two in the inn to pay the landlord, to whom I sent word by my steward not to be in any uneasiness about me, as I was going to sup that night with a colonel, a friend of mine, where I probably would be obliged to play and spend the whole night. We reached at length the galley of our Captain, who was waiting for me with a good deal of inquietude.

This officer had caused a little chamber to be prepared for me, into which he conducted me, and where I found my two coffers ranged together, with a table covered with some delicious meats. We sat down, and after having supped heartily, we lay down to take some repose. I was dying with fear, lest some cursed contrary wind would detain us in port, and give my relations sufficient leisure to be informed of my flight, and to obtain an order

from the Senate to have me arrested. My alarms, however, were vain; at day-break I heard a noise, which announced to me the departure of the galleys. I looked through a hole in my chamber, and perceived with joy that all the crew had begun to row, until we got clear out of port. Then profiting of a wind, that could not be more favourable, we spread our sails, and soon lost sight of land.

CHAP. III.

Gusman has the Misfortune to lose Sayavedra at Sea.—He goes to Sarragossa, and falls in love with a young Widow.

We had already doubled Cape Noli, when the captain came to inform me, if the wind did not change for three days, we would have an agreeable voyage. We watered at Monaco, and, the morning following, having put to

sea with a most promising gale, we reached the Islands of Hieres, where we passed that night. The third day we anchored a Chateau d'If, in sight of Marseilles, and the fourth we made land at Roses.

I was rejoicing at so fortunate a navigation, when I was informed that Sayavedra was sea-sick, and felt extremely ill. I ran to him immediately, and found him, in fact, attacked with a very violent fever. I was very much afflicted at it; nevertheless, as I knew we would be very soon in Barcelona, and that he would there get ease, I was consoled. The fifth day shewed itself very different from the preceding ones; it appeared gloomy and lowring, and, to increase our misfortune, not a breath of wind agitated the atmosphere. We, however, by the dint of rowing, expected to sleep that night in Barcelona. But we found our mistake two

hours after. There happened so furious a tempest, that we all believed our destruction inevitable. We endeavoured, in vain, to make to land; the oar became useless; we were absolutely obliged to *make channel* that night. What a night of horror was it for us! Sometimes the sea raised its waves to the clouds, at other times opening its convulsed bosom, it exposed its unfathomable abysses to our astonished sight. Some invoked the most honoured saints in their own country; others offered vows; one man, on his knees, was addressing the most fervent prayers to Heaven, and another, confessing his sins aloud, was asking pardon for them of God. As for me, a new Jonas, I was buried in a profound reverie, and, believing myself the cause of this frightful tempest, said within myself, Wretch, behold thyself in this distress for having robbed thy relations,

and being charged with gold, whilst the sea is going to entomb both thyself and thy riches.

Not being able to think otherwise, I resigned myself to my fate, and patiently awaited death. However, the danger which terrified us, was but a false alarm. The weather suddenly changed, hope succeeded despair, and joy desolation. That night proved only destructive to poor unfortunate Sayavedra. This unhappy lad, whose brain was already deranged by a fever, the violence of which increased every moment, lost entirely his reason, in hearing the cries and lamentations which the fear of shipwreck excited in the galley. He bounced up in a fit, which gave him new strength, and, ascending by the side of the poop, precipitated himself into the sea, my servant, who watched him, not being able to resist sleep. When I learned this

accident, I conceived so lively an affliction, that I could not possibly be more grieved; no one has ever wept more bitterly a brother than I did my dear Sayavedrá. I was inconsolable for him, and truly I had good reason to regret him.

We entered about noon the port of Barcelona. I had already prepared Favello not to expect I would make any long delay in tnat city, having told him, after the storm, that I had made a vow to go to our Lady of Monserrat as soon as I could set foot on land, and from thence would pay a visit to my mother in Andalusia. He dreaded to oppose so just a duty; and besides, not being able to abandon his ship that day, he told me sadly, when I wished to take my leave of him, that as, according to all appearances, we should never see each other again, at least that I would stop the day following in Barcelona. In

the mean time he asked me where I intended to lodge. I named an inn which I knew, but I designed to make choice of another in a quarter very remote from that. In short, sensible of those testimonies of friendship I had received from him, I embraced him tenderly, and made him a present of a ring worth an hundred pistoles, beseeching him to wear it for my sake. He accepted it, the tears standing in his eyes, as a proof that it was the last adieu I bade him, and, on my side, feeling myself too much affected, I hastened to quit him, in order to spare him the pain of reading in my looks what caused our separation.

The first care with which I charged myself in arriving at the inn, where I caused my coffers to be carried, was to have provided for me three good mules. In fact, four hours after, these mules were brought, which appeared exactly

the ones I wanted. You may be sure I paid dear enough for them; but that, situated as I was, troubled me very little. Beside the value of twenty-five thoufand franks, which I might boast myself possessed of, I inherited four thousand by the death of my companion in fortune. I hired also a muleteer, who knew the roads well, and set out the day following, as soon as the gates of the city were opened. The impatience I was in to withdraw from Barcelona, seemed to me well founded: A felouque, or packet boat, might arrive from my relations, with orders to have my reverence pinned. I added even to an apprehension so prudent, the precaution of shunning the high roads, telling my servants, that as I travelled for pleasure, I would be glad to reach the Ebro as soon as possible, and to journey along its banks, in order to see the

charming landscapes through which that river steers its meandering course.

In three days I reached the Ebro. I began to believe myself out of the reach of all pursuit, and to reckon on my riches, without reflecting that I was travelling through a country as fertile in robbers as Italy. It is true, my servant and the muleteer were both armed with firelocks, which I had taken care to buy at Barcelona. Beside that, I carried my jewels so well concealed, that no one could find them without stripping me stark naked. I met several horsemen, whose physiognomy was more capable to intimidate than tranquillize me, such resemblance had they to robbers; but whether they had as much fear of me as I had of them, they continued their journey, and suffered me to pass unmolested.

Night surprised me at a place where

there was a fine abbey, which I took for a castle, and to which I approached with the intention of requesting a lodging; but finding at the bottom a miserable village, I altered my thoughts. We stopped at a wretched hut, where hung the shapeless sign of a common tavern. This elegant inn was already closely locked. We rapped loudly at the door, imploring most fervently for admission; no one answered. After a long and mortifying delay, a peasant appeared at the window. This was the inn-keeper, who having considered us by the light of a large lamp, which he had in his hand, began to laugh, saying, Go, Signor cavalier, my house is not fit to entertain you. Go to the abbey, where you will be well treated, and better lodged than with me. After having replied to the peasant, that I would follow his advice, I besought him to conduct me to the convent, the road to

which I was ignorant of, and in order to render my entreaty efficacious, gave him a handful of reas.

The monastery was on an eminence. We were near half an hour ascending to it by a very bad road, which did not fail to be very distressing to persons already much fatigued. The landlord informed me this was a convent of nuns, all ladies of quality; that it was one of the richest monasteries in all Spain, and hospitably entertained all strangers of distinction who passed through the place. When we had arrived at the gate, we rapped, and rapped again several times, without being given to understand from within that any one heard us. One came at length to speak to us through the wicket, and to ask us what we wanted. The landlord, whom the porter knew, told him, we were looking for lodging, which he could not give us, and of course con-

ducted us to the abbey. The muleteer added, by my orders, that he hoped an asylum would be given until day to a strange nobleman, who had lost his way travelling to Sarragossa.

The porter answered, that the convent gate was locked at eight o'clock, and that it was then nine: however, though this was the rule, he would go, from the consideration he naturally had for persons of quality, and inform the abbess of my embarrassment, and would do whatever she should order him. I was obliged to have patience, and wait her answer at the gate, which the porter was to bring. The porter returned, and let us know the mother abbess refused to admit gentlemen at that hour, who were to her unknown. This refusal afflicted me. I dismounted from my mule; I advanced towards the wicket, and, speaking myself to the porter, besought him in terms the most

touching, to return to the mother abbess, and tell her, on my part, that if she knew the obligation she would confer on me, by granting me a retreat for that night, she would cease to be inexorable. The porter, whom I thought I had mollified, told me it was to no purpose to persist in seeking to obtain what she would invariably refuse to grant.

It was the finest night I ever witnessed. I walked round the house, observing with an eye of curiosity all I could discern by the light of the stars, which shone extremely bright. I followed a sloping path, which conducted me under a balcony that looked towards the Ebro. I sat down on a bank at the foot of a tree opposite the balcony, which I attentively considered, and which I imagined to be the apartment of the mother abbess.. Very soon a confused noise of female voices struck

my ear; then all at once a profound silence caused this noise to cease; and the silence, a moment after, was interrupted in its turn by a Spanish song, which was sung by a very delicate voice. If the singer gave pleasure to the ladies who were listening to her, she was in recompence very much applauded. Another lady sang afterwards an Italian air, which I knew, and received not less applause. So great an itching then possessed me to make the air ring with my melodious voice, I could not resist the emotion. I had no small difficulty to gain upon my impatience to let the second singer finish her song. I was at first tempted to sing the same Italian air which I had just heard, and which was one of those that had gained me most honor in Florence, at the concert of the Grand Duke. However, I had the politeness to omit that, in order to spare the lady

the mortification and shame of comparison. To lose nothing by the change, remembering another air, which had charmed the Grand Duchess, I made choice of it.

I sang, and, as soon as I had finished, there were cries of surprise, intermingled with admiration; a glass door, which closed the balcony, immediately opened, and I saw several ladies appear, who hurried forward to look on all sides, in order to discover the personage who sang so agreeably. I did not seem to notice them, and, after having ceased a moment, recommenced my tune. As soon as I had finished, behold me a second time admired by the ladies, who, from the expectation of being regaled by a new song, suspended their praises, in order to afford me silence. I perceived this was their design, and, to irritate the desire they had that I should sing again, I was malicious

enough to hold my tongue, without stirring from my retreat.

A lady, more impatient than the rest, spoke to me, and said that one air was not sufficient for a company, that passionately loved a charming voice. If it be too little, replied I in Italian, for so many ladies, it is too much for a pilgrim, to whom they have so cruelly refused hospitality.

My answer excited great bursts of laughter, and gave the nuns to understand I was the stranger who demanded lodging at the abbey. Signor Cavalier, cried one of them, be not displeased, I pray, for our seeming neglect; it is a law established in this convent, not to admit any stranger after eight o'clock; but, on account of your charming voice, our mother abbess will dispense with this rule: she is going to give orders for the gate to be opened, if you do not wish to await the day on the banks of

that river, after the fashion of knight-errants. I answered the person who spoke, that I was rejoiced to find an order from the mother abbess to obtain shelter; I was obliged to supplicate it by the harmony of music. At this little trait of wit, the nuns began to laugh again, as well because the abbess was present, or rather because it was she herself to whom I was speaking. They judged by that I was a gallant of some taste, a circumstance by no means displeasing to them. As they wished to see more closely my figure, of which they had but an indistinct view where I sat, they besought me to come in, saying the mother abbess would be reconciled with me. At these words, in order to testify to them I asked nothing better than to introduce myself into their monastery, I got up, and, after having respectfully saluted the company in passing before the balcony, I

regained the gate at a round trot. I was no sooner arrived there, than the porter came to open it for me. He bid me take the trouble to follow him, and conducted me to a large parlour, that displayed both elegance and splendour, and well lighted. I found the abbess there, who had with her a secular lady; they both were sitting on cushions of violet-coloured damask, besides six or seven nuns who were standing behind them. All those ladies kept profoundly silent, and maintained an air of gravity that would have disconcerted any other but myself; I, however, had frequented the grate at Rome, and my humour was perfectly suitable to the nuns. I accosted them jocosely, and, by some lucky sallies which escaped me, soon made them lay aside their affected gravity. I deprecated in a manner so humorous that rigorous rule, which forbid them to open at night the gates of

the monastery to poor strangers, that I soon set them all in a train of laughter.

In the mean time, a small table was laid, on which some venison pie, with wine and forced sweetmeats, were served up. They had no need to press me to eat or drink. I acquitted myself as a traveller who was famishing with hunger and thirst. I did not fail in regaling myself, to throw in now and then some gallant inuendos to the mother abbess, as well as to the secular lady, who appeared to me very handsome. She had an air of youth, and a sprightliness, that rendered her very smart and engaging. Some nuns remarking that I found her very much to my taste, asked me if I thought their community had any reason to applaud themselves for the acquisition they had made of such a lady : this question inspired me with a thousand gallant thoughts, and all very obliging with re-

spect to her. I spoke but in Italian; and as I was dressed according to the fashion of that country, I passed without difficulty in their minds as a person of that nation. Those ladies who knew that language, affected, in order to do themselves the more honour, not to speak to me in Spanish. When they saw I stopped from eating, they made the conversation turn on music, and all together requested I would pay my reckoning with some Italian air. I complied with a good grace, and gradually animated by the eulogiums conferred on me at the end of every couplet, I got into such a rage of singing, that one song scarce waited for another. On their side, the ladies, and particularly the fair secular, who were totally taken up with the pleasure of listening to me, thought of nothing less than retiring, though it was already past midnight. I believe the day would have surprised us

in the parlour, if the Abbess, to preserve the decorum of monastic seclusion, had not thought proper to put an end to a pastime so contrary to interior recollection, in reproaching the nuns for abusing my complaisance. The gentleman, said she, must be fatigued; besides, we ought to spare something for to-morrow. He will not depart, I think, without giving us the satisfaction of seeing him again. This was to genteely bid me hold my tongue. At the bottom, I was proud of it, and bidding the company good night, joined the porter, who was waiting for me at the parlour-door, to conduct me to the apartment which was destined for me.

I was not a little astonished in entering there, to find my servants, whom they took care to send for, together with my baggage, and to regale them as well as me. I learned also my three

mules had not been forgotten, and that, thanks to the sweet voice of their master, they had in the convent stable litter up to their belly, I had previously charged my muleteer to get particular information, who the secular lady was, that I had seen with the Abbess; he acquitted himself well of this employment: Sir, said he, the morning following as I was getting up, I have spoken to that lady's servant, whom you long so earnestly to know, and he has told me without ceremony her whole affairs. She is a rich widow, said he, and one of the noblest families in Sarragossa. She has many lovers, who seek her in marriage, and among the rest, a nephew of the Abbess, a lad of twenty-two years of age at the farthest, made to perfection, and as fair as the day. The porter of this monastery has been telling me this moment, that the young widow, who arrived

here last night, but an hour or two before you, is to return this afternoon.

I felt very soon my heart had yielded to the charms of the widow of Sarragossa. I had no longer any doubt of it, when I saw her in the parlour, where the Abbess, after the office, had invited me. I appeared with all the good humour of the preceding night. I found not there all the nuns I had seen before. There were then only three with the Abbess, and the fair object of my new amour. The conversation soon became gallant, and of course trifling. We were all in a fine train of laughing, when one came to tell the Abbess that Don Antonio de Miras, was going to appear in the parlour. This news overwhelmed the good lady with joy; for this was the dear nephew, who she so much desired should espouse the charming widow. He had been informed the evening before by

his good aunt, that Donna Lucia (for so the secular lady was named) was in the abbey, and he took care not to neglect an opportunity so favourable to make his court to a lady, whose spouse he so earnestly wished to be. The portrait, the muleteer had drawn me of this young man, was by no means exaggerated. I had never seen so handsome a cavalier. I would, I believe, have died with jealousy, in seeing the figure he made, if I had not been previously informed, that he was a fool. This thought supported me against such formidable advantages, and I made one remark, which ultimately encouraged me to dispute with this brilliant rival the heart of Donna Lucia. I perceived that this lady, far from testifying any joy at his arrival, looked on him with an eye of indifference, and answered his civilities with a good deal of coldness and unconcern.

Don Antonio and I looked at first at each other like young cocks. However, wishing to scrape acquaintance, I loaded him with compliments. In less than an hour we became very good friends. When the hour of dinner approached, the abbess caused two tables to be laid in the parlour, one without the grate, for her nephew and me, and the other within for the ladies. The repast, which might enter into competition with those of the greatest noblemen, was seasoned with jests and anecdotes, that diverted very much the company. More than half the afternoon passed away very agreeably. In a word, I spoke, sang, laughed, and shewed myself a man to answer every purpose. The nuns even, though accustomed to receive the visits of gentlemen, avowed to me, they had never seen one, who had diverted them so much. In the mean time, the hour of

separation drew nigh. It was time for the fair widow to set off for Sarragossa, if she wished to arrive there before night. She took leave of the mother abbess and her nuns, and got into her litter, which was waiting for her at the door. My design being to accompany this lady, I had caused my equipage to to be in readiness. I vaulted lightly on my mule, which made but a very sorry figure near Don Antonio's courser. Beside his having one of the best horses in Spain, this young gentleman knew very well how to manage him. He put him through a thousand curvets and manœuvres, with the best grace in the world. I was furiously mortified not to be able to imitate him with my phlegmatic and undisciplined mule. I however attempted sometimes by spurring and reining to make him cut some genteel capers, but this only set him kicking like a devil, to the no small di-

version of the ladies, who were looking at us through the windows.

My rival and I rode at each side of the litter, in order to converse with Donna Lucia along the road. We began, or more properly speaking, I began to converse familiarly with her, for young Miras had so little share in it, that there was little to be apprehended from any interruption of his. Lucia asked me, if I intended to delay for any time at Sarragossa. That will depend on the pleaurse I shall have there, answered I. If something should happen, which I most anxiously desire, I will make there a long stay. These words I accompanied with a tender glance, which she did not stand in need of, to understand me more explicitly. She penetrated so well the sense of my answer, that she immediately blushed, and I thought I read in her eyes, that she was not offended. I

was very well pleased with myself to have hazarded this declaration, as it was not disagreeable to her, and to have made it with impunity before Miras, to whom it was a complete enigma.

I was astonished, without testifying any thing of it to Lucia, to see a young and charming person like her on the high road, more than a league from Sarragossa, and having no other retinue, than a duenna, one servant and a muleteer. I knew not as yet the privileges widows have in that country, where they enjoy unrestricted liberty; nevertheless, when they travel with so weak an escort, they expose themselves often to several unexpected and unwished-for rencounters. Donna Lucia, though accompanied by two cavaliers, and her own people, was however alarmed at a trifling adventure which happened us on the road. We had already gone half our journey, when we

saw before us a superb charger, whose trappings resembled those of* Bayardo, or Brigliadero, and who advancing towards us in a round canter, raised such a cloud of dust around him, that we could scarcely at first discern the cavalier who rode him; but as soon as we were able to remark him, I thought I perceived the furious Rolando, he had such a fierce and warlike aspect.

When he was about ten or twelve paces off, he stopt short to look at me. The strange fashion of my dress struck him, and he seemed still more surprised at the honor I had of speaking familiarly with the beautiful widow, than at the novelty of my habiliment. He was one of those who tenderly sighed for that lady, and who most of all flattered himself with the hopes of

* The first was Orlando's charger, the other war-horse belonged to Ruggeioro. See Don Quixotte, p. 283.

winning her. He reckoned on the opinion, he imagined, all the world had of his bravery, to disperse his insignificant rivals. Seeing then Don Antonio on one side, and me on the other, he clapt spurs to his steed, and driving furiously in between Miras and Lucia, he nearly at once overturned the young cavalier and the litter. The lady was shocked at this brutal action; then getting into a passion with the bully, she told him the road was wide enough for him to dispense with committing such extravagancies and insulting persons, who deserved more respect. He made some apologies to Lucia with a very bad grace, or rather with a tone of raillery, and by far more insulting than the action itself.

Miras piqued with the affront he received, put in the first emotions of resentment his hand on one of his pistols, but however drew it not out of

the holster, either from an apprehension he would miss his aim, or an excess of respect for his mistress, which caused him to *decline* an *engagement*, that might alarm her delicate feelings. I pitied the young man, and felt a violent temptation to take his part, judging that this swaggerer, with whom he had to deal, was nothing less than a rank coward. Nevertheless I reflected I might be mistaken; and considering besides that the party interested took it very cool, and had no notion of avenging himself, I was not fool enough to espouse his quarrel, which of course had no bad consequence. All I could do for him was to invite him to my side, and give him my place, which he willingly accepted, without being in the least embarrassed for appearing a coward in the eyes even of Lucia, by abandoning through fear the place which he before occupied. The cavalier, who

acted the bravo, was called Don Luc de Ribera. He had learned, that the fair widow the evening before had set off to sleep at the monastery I have spoken of, and was to return that day. He left the city, knowing he should meet her, with the intention of conducting her back, and serving her as an escort.

As soon as this bully saw, that Don Antonio quitted his post instead of maintaining it, he hastily took possession of it, and prepared himself with a victorious air to entertain the lady, who deceived his expectation; for to mortify him the more, she answered not a single word to all he was able to say. She affected to have always her eyes attached to Mirza and me, and to speak but to us alone. She never once looked at him. It is thus we arrived at Sarragossa, and conducted Donna Lucia to her house. This lady thanked

me for the honor I had done her, and told me, she hoped the city would have sufficient charms to detain me at least for some time. With regard to her two other conductors, she observed less ceremony with them; she paid their trouble only with slight bows very careless and very indifferent. I said nothing to the haughty Don Luc in parting with him, but to Don Antonio, I returned a thousand compliments, of which he shewed himself so very sensible, that he should absolutely accompany me to the Angel, a famous inn I remarked in entering the city, and where I had directed my people to alight with my baggage. There Miras took leave of me in terms, which persuaded me, that far from suspecting me to be his rival, he believed me one of his best friends.

I found in the inn, my servant muleteer busied in getting a proper apart-

ment prepared for me, where I supped alone. The inn-keeper, who was one of those keen jesters, who are filled with witticisms and conundrums, came to salute and keep me company, imagining I would be enchanted with his conversation. He began with telling every thing which was passing in town, the privileges of which he raised to the skies, without forgetting the boldness and pride, with which the inhabitants maintained those privileges. I listened with pleasure, in proportion to the several strokes of wit, and excellent traits of satire that escaped him amidst a thousand impertinencies, a thing common enough with common-place babblers. He ceased at length, as soon as I had done supper, to fatigue me with his scurrilities, made a low bow, and thought to retire. Wait, said I, my friend; I request you will get me a tailor to-morrow, who understands his

business; I have some employment to give him. In charging my landlord with this commission, it was to furnish him with new matter of talk. He took occasion from this introduction to fall upon tailors in general, and to say all the bad, that is usually spoken of them. However, after having lacerated the whole body of them piece-meal, he finished with assuring me he knew one honest of them, that had a conscience, who contented himself with his stipulated prices, without cabbaging the smallest bit of cloth, and who would serve me to a hair.

He kept his word, and the next morning, as I was getting out of bed, introduced a taylor, who appeared to me very reasonable, and well acquainted with the newest fashions. I gave orders for a coat according to the Spanish mode, in a manner I wished myself; he approved very much of my

taste, and told me in going away, he would exactly follow my directions, and that in three days he would bring me a coat made in the first style, and of a taste so gallant, that every one should admire it. In waiting, I made use of my Italian suit that I had bought in Florence, and which did me tolerable honor on the Coso, a place where all persons of distinction in Sarragossa are accustomed to walk. At least I appeared without shame among the wooers of Donna Luoia; but as soon as I had my new coat on, I surpassed them all, both by its peculiar splendour and some jewels, with which I took care to decorate myself. I was very soon looked upon as a man in love with that lady, whose attention I undoubtedly attracted. Whether I accompanied her in her walks, or passed under her balcony, she distinguished me above all my rivals. The haughty Don Luis

suffered impatiently this preference, and the looks he darted at me, were full of fury. I lived with the others in a good understanding enough, particularly with Miras, who scarcely left me at all, and who procured me all the pleasures he could, in making me acquainted with most respectable families of the city.

I saw myself then esteemed and honoured at Sarragossa, when one morning my servant came to tell me, that a gentleman was at my chamber door, and asked to speak to me. I was still in bed, and imagining he was some friend of Don Antonio's, answered he might come in. I was not a little surprised, when I saw the personage who had caused himself to be announced to me. He was a huge mis-shapen fellow, whom I had never seen before. His villainous face derived no additional beauty from two monstrous cocked up whiskers. He wore a hat, whose

high sugar-loaf'd crown nearly reached the ceiling, with a long rapier, the hilt of which he affected to sink before, in order to elevate the point behind by shrugging his shoulders, and taking such pondrous strides, that my whole chamber shook at every step of this gigantic Olibrius.

It may undoubtedly be supposed, that after such a hectoring entrance, he accosted me with some haughty discourse; it was no such thing; he began to traverse my chamber from one end to the other without saying a single word, contenting himself with casting some menacing looks at me from time to time. I could not long put up with this dumb bravadoing. I jumped up in an instant, and seizing my two pistols, asked the fellow what he had to say. My action, as I could perceive, levelled his pride at once: Do you know, said he, with an agitated look,

the most valiant Don Luc de Ribera, the flower of the knights of Arragon? Yes, said I, by sight; but what the devil matter whether I know him or not. I am come, replied he, presenting me with a paper folded in the form of a letter, to seek you on his account. This note will tell you the rest. I took the note with a tranquil air enough, perceiving the bearer was more alarmed than myself, and having opened it, read the following words:

"Whoever you are, whether Italian or Spaniard, you are very audacious to come into this country to dispute with us the hearts of our ladies. However, as we believe you a stranger, we will excuse your temerity, on condition that in twenty-four hours you quit Sarragossa; but if your evil genius cause you to despise our resentment, prepare your arms in order to defend yourself against Don Luc de Ribera, whom no

one as yet has been able to conquer, and whom you must overcome to arrive at the possession of Donna Luci a."

I was not at all astonished at this compliment. I had in opening the billet, a presentiment that it could contain nothing less than a challenge, or something approaching it very nearly, since it came from Don Luc. Sir, said I to the bearer, tell the gentleman who sent you here, that whether Italian or Spaniard, I have two swords at his service; and that I am ready to fight him in my shirt, to avoid every foul play whatsoever. No coats of mail for me; genuine combatants never make use of them in single fight. Let Don Luc regulate matters thereupon, and learn, that in order to merit the heart of Lucy, I am a man to brave all kind of dangers. There is the answer for you. Give it to me in writing, replied the bearer of the billet. I am glad the regular Don

Luc can be assured I have executed my message as a man of honour. To satisfy this brave messenger, I took the trouble of writing what I had already spoken. He then carried off my answer, promising he would return in the afternoon with another billet, which should regulate the hour and place of combat. When this knave had left me, I applauded myself for having so well conducted myself through this scene. Although I had very little inclination for fighting, I was rejoiced to have paid rhodomontade in its own coin. It sometimes happens that one causes fear in others by false intrepidity. Let the worst go to the worst, my mules were ready, and I knew perfectly how to make a judicious retreat. It is true, I would have a good deal of difficulty to withdraw from Donna Lucia, but I did not yet love her so well as to hesitate between her and the preservation of my dear little person.

I was beginning to get tired of my lodging, and was preparing to go walk, when Don Antonio and some of his friends arrived. They said, they came to offer me their services in the affair of honour I had on hands. I denied it at first, and wished to shew myself mysterious; but they told me the whole town knew that Don Luc had sent me a challenge, and that duels being forbidden, Justice had already caused that gentleman to be put under an arrest. I judged by that, Miras and his friends were people ready to run to your assistance, when they see you out of danger. I ceased then to dissemble, and related to them, very much to my own advantage, what had passed in the morning between the magnanimous herald and myself. Upon that, Don Antonio represented to me I might be put under an arrest too, and advised me to retire to his house. This I did not

fail to do in order to shun an imprisonment, which I feared for more than one reason. I passed the day agreeably in this gentleman's house, who did all in his power to make me sleep there. I stood out obstinately on account of my coffers, which would have disturbed me all night, and at ten o'clock at night resumed the road to my inn.

I met in the streets two women, preceded by a servant who carried a large lantern, by the light of which it was easy to observe they were very handsome. I accosted them politely, saying some very obliging things to them. They answered me with a good deal of vivacity, and not doubting, by the splendour of my dress, but that I was a *Buena Ropa*, ogled me in such a manner, that they insensibly engaged me to accompany them to the turn of a street, where they stopped all at once; she who appeared the principal said—Sir

Knight, come no farther I beseech you. Wait for us in this place. We are going to a house about two paces from hence, to visit a sick lady; we will leave it in a quarter of an hour at the farthest, and rejoin you here: perhaps you will not be sorry for having met with us this night. You shall hear us sing and play on the lute to a miracle. In finishing those words they both escaped me, and I was foolish enough to take as granted this fine promise of theirs. I had patience to wait in the street until midnight. I was then but too well persuaded I was the dupe of this adventure, all-cunning a fellow as I believed myself on that matter. I will avow, even to my confusion, that I could not save my purse from those sham ladies.

As I was obliged, in returning to my lodging, to pass by the house of my fair widow, I could not resist the plea-

sure of casting my eyes on the dear mansion of my queen, and thought I saw at the door the figure of a man. I imagined at first it was Don Luc, because that cavalier was accustomed every night to take his round in that place, and made not this remark without feeling an emotion mingled with fear and jealousy. Nevertheless, recollecting that he was in prison, it occurred to me, it might not be him. I took heart, and pushed on by a movement of jealousy, I approached the object which caused it, and who, according to all appearances being more afraid than I, disappeared at my approach. Having arrived at the door, I heard the deaf noise of a bolt, which made me judge that some one was going to open it. I was not at all deceived in my conjecture, as a moment after, the door was half-opened in such a manner that a man could pass through. Curiosity to

seek to the bottom of this affair, where I believed myself more interested than I really was, forced me to slip in without any noise. I immediately felt a hand, which seized me in order to conduct me in, for we were in a dark alley, where there was not the smallest glimpse of light. I understood well the person mistook me, and could no longer doubt it, when having been introduced into a back-parlour, I was there rudely regaled with a lively embrace, seasoned with the smell of pepper, garlic, and saffron, which gave me to understand that the amorous wanton, who lavished her favours on me, must be the cook. However, in the midst of her transports, touching my clothes and face, she suspected I was not the darling lover she was waiting for. To expiate her mistake, she suddenly let go her hold, and thought to take to her heels; but I held her by the petticoat.

She struggled hard to disengage herself, and I as hard to render her efforts useless, until at length in this new kind of wrestling we both fell with considerable noise. This awoke two lackeys who slept in an adjoining closet. They got up in haste, each armed himself with a sword, thinking they heard robbers, and came quite softly with a lamp into the parlour, where we both lay stretched on the floor.

They knew me immediately, and surprised to see a gentleman, who aspired to the hand of their mistress, pursue with so much ardour the good graces of a tun-bellied cook, who had never tempted themselves, burst out into fits of laughter that threw me into strange confusion. Admire the insolence of that creature; she had the effrontery to accuse me of having a design of offering violence to her honour, and said I had hidden myself in the

house for that purpose. Instead of endeavouring to justify myself, I hastily took my hat, which she had knocked off with a box, and addressing the lackey who held the lamp, begged he would light me to the street-door, which he did, laughing all the way in such a manner, as to render me almost desperate. I got back to my inn at a great pace, cruelly mortified at so shameful and so miserable an adventure; not doubting but the report would be all over the city as soon as day-light would appear, and that I should become the town-talk of all its inhabitants. That idea, which afflicted me more than one could imagine, made me take the resolution of delaying no longer in Sarragóssa, than while employed in my preparation to leave it. My equipage was ready at day-break, and my mules, as if they had partaken of the impatience of their master to

quit a place, where he could not appear without shame, took to the road with ardour, which gave me extreme pleasure.

CHAP. IV.

Gusman departs far Madrid, where he engages in a new Gallantry, the End of which was not so agreeable as the Beginning.

I TOOK the road to Madrid, and six days after my departure from Sarragossa, arrived at Alcala de Henares, a city, whose situation is charming, and which the beauty of its buildings renders comparable to the most flourishing capitols in the world. Moreover, what had the most charms for me, was, that the Belles Lettres seemed to have made here their constant abode. I should certainly have established myself there, if I had not had the foolish desire to visit once more St. James's

Meadow, and go shine in a place, where I had formerly made so miserable a figure.

I stopped but eight days at Alcala. I pushed forward to Madrid. That celebrated city, saw arrive with three mules, two of whom were laden with valuable effects, that same Gusman, who had carried a basket within its walls. I was some moments in pain to know where I should put up ; but remembering an inn, which in my time was the most famous, in the great street of Toledo, I went to alight there. I found a change in this inn. The landlord was dead, and his widow was not able to support it on the same footing. She was however an active woman, and one who had more than one string to her bow. I perceived very well the decay of the house ; nevertheless, the complaisance and attention they paid me, whom they looked upon as a rich

nobleman, hindered me from changing my lodging.

I took care to inform myself of my *three-bagged* apothecary: I was told he had departed for that country, where his drugs sent many a patient before him. I felt a secret joy at this news, for I felt before some little uneasiness, though I had no reason to fear that any one would know me. It was more than ten years since I had left Madrid, and beside, my person being no longer the same, if I may use the expression, who the devil could have been able to recognize Gusman, under the superb appearances, which disguised him. I took pleasure at first in sporting the magnificence of my clothes, and particularly the coat I got made at Sarragossa. I exhibited them in their turn, in the morning at the churches, and in the evening on the Prado.

One night returning to my lodging

in order to go to bed, I heard, in crossing a corridor, which led to my chamber, a voice, which accompanied the delicate touches of a harp. I stopped to listen to this little concert, which was performed in an apartment very contiguous to mine, and felt myself inflamed with a violent desire to see the persons who were executing it. My landlady charged with two plates, one of comfits and the other of biscuits, arrived that moment, and satisfied my curiosity. She told me, they were two ladies from Guadalaxara, who came to lodge with her that night, and whom a great lawsuit had brought to Madrid. I signified to her I was dying with desire to hear them nearer, and I should have for her a gratitude as lasting as my life, if she could obtain from those ladies permission for me to have the honour of saluting them. She said she would ask that liberty of them, but that she would

not take upon herself to promise me any thing, because one was a mother who led a very retired life with her daughter, a very pretty girl, whom she never let out of her sight. At these words I redoubled my entreaties to engage the hostess to procure me this wished-for favour. She assured me she would spare no pains for that. Upon this assurance I let her enter the apartment of those ladies, and waited their answer at the door, which was to beg I would excuse them, if they did not wish to receive a visit at that hour from a gentleman, who was a siranger to them. I pretended to be sensibly afflicted at this refusal, which really piqued me not a little; so much, that my good landlady on her side, appearing to be touched with my pain, went in again to the ladies, to make a last effort, and returned at length to tell me, that they would grant me that favour, provided I

would not exceed a quarter of an hour in their chamber. I wanted but to be introduced, persuaded that when I should have footing there once, the condition of the time would be the least of our consideration. I presented myself then with the air of a man of importance, and addressing the mother fitst, made her a very profound bow. I afterwards saluted the daughter, and they both received me in such a manner, as led me to understand they were perfectly acquainted with good life. They were, both one and the other, so neatly dressed for ladies who were travelling, I could not refrain from being astonished. The mother might pass for a handsome woman. All the fault I found in her was, that she had something of effrontery and intrigue in her face. As for her daughter, she had at once a countenance made up of tenderness and vivacity, and was a person

of about seventeen or eighteen years of age.

I took notice in their chamber of two large silver candlesticks, and two magnificent toilettes fitted up: I saw also there three large coffers, with a head servant in livery, who stood in waiting in one corner of the room, ready to attend his mistresses with all respect due to such exalted characters. I did not doubt but those ladies were descended from one the best houses of Gnadalaxara. So I began with excusing the liberty I had taken, and told them, in order to justify myself, that I had been so charmed with their concert, I was not able to resist the desire I had of testifying my satisfaction. The mother answered my compliment with a great deal of wit and modesty, whict naturally gave us an occasion to turn the conversation on music. I gave them to understand by my discourse, I was

no novice in that elegant accomplishment. I besought them to recommence their concert, and the better to prevail on them, offered to accompany them myself. The ladies, curious to hear me, disposed themselves for it. The mother resumed the harp, and the daughter began to sing an air, which I knew. I made at the same time my voice so melodiously display its powers, that it had the same effect here, as it had at Florence, or at the abbey near Sarragossa. The ladies appeared transported with pleasure. They forgot the condition of the quarter of an hour, and midnight had already passed ere we thought of separating. The mother, however, for the sake of decorum, told me very politely, it was time I should retire, at the same time telling me they should be rejoiced to be able often to amuse themselves thus with me, during their stay at Madrid. I took leave of

them then in looking at the daughter in a manner to persuade her I had not seen her charms with impunity. This was at the bottom but too literally true, as I was not able to close an eye that whole night.

The day following, the landlady, who was accustomed to take chocolate with me every morning, entered my room with a smiling air, and said, I have just come from the apartment of your neighbours; it is inconceivable to what a pitch you have pleased them; beside finding your person entirely amiable, they are charmed with your droll and amusing wit. If on your side you wish ever so little to push your point, I am certain you will not be ill treated. The mother and daughter are equally pleased with you. I swallowed those sweet words like honey, and, ravished to have made, in so short a time, such a lively impression on those

ladies, replied, I was not less pleased with them; that the mother appeared to me still very attracting; but that I never saw any thing comparable to the daughter, the conquest of whom I would most willingly undertake, if any woman of spirit would assist me to succeed in that enterprise. I understand you, replied the hostess, you wish me to render you that service; I consent to it: but where shall we begin this fine scheme? I shall take, said I, the ladies to walk this evening, and cause a sumptuous collation to be some where prepared for them. A bad beginning, cried my confidant: that would alarm the mother, who, instantly perceiving your design, would abruptly break with you, and never see you again during her life. Let us plan it better, continued she, after having paused a few moments; it will be necessary to have this feast in my name. I will have a

collation prepared, according to your orders, in a garden I have on the banks of the Manzanares, and will invite the ladies to spend the evening with me there. You shall surprise us there, as if chance had led you to the place; and we shall be more at liberty there than any where else. I applauded this idea, and the landlady charged herself with the care of engaging the mother in this party of pleasure.

My confidant took the field immediately, to propose it in the ladies chamber, where she remained nearly an hour; which made me suppose she had no small difficulty to persuade them. In fact, returning to rejoin me, she told me the mother stood a long time out; I even despaired, added she, of making her accept the invitation; I have, however, brought it about. We have settled upon the party. All I have to beg of you is, that you will conduct yourself in

such a manner as to give them no room to think you have acted in concert with me. When you shall enter the garden, seem greatly astonished to meet us there. In a word, let your arrival seem the effect of chance. I replied, she might depend on it I would not spoil any of the scheme. We took afterwards every measure requisite to render the collation agreeable, and we succeeded. As the mother had not her harp there, the daughter and I were satisfied to sing together, every now and then glancing by stealth the sweetest oglings in the world at each other. Night insensibly surprised us in the garden, and whilst the landlady, in order to oblige me, was discoursing with the mother, I was whispering the softest language imaginable to the daughter, who listened to it not without pleasure. It was necessary, at length, to return to the city. I escorted the ladies even

to their apartment, where, through special favour, they granted me half an hour's conversation. After which I retired more amorous, as I thought, of my new mistress, than of all her predecessors.

I sent the day following by my hostess the most tender and gallant of love-letters; but no answer was given. I wrote her a second, which I slipt into her hand the same night, in the apartment of those ladies, who were again regaled at my expence by the landlady, and this turn I was answered very laconically indeed, for I got but two lines, signifying nothing, which I however did not fail to find very witty. It is thus they held the sugar-plum pretty high up to irritate my desires; or, more properly speaking, this whole manœuvre was the work of our good hostess, who, labouring in this intrigue, made the personages on both sides contribute as she

pleased to her profit. The mother went often of a morning to solicit, as she said, respecting her law-suit, and, wi[illegible] that happened, my officious confidant came to apprise me of it, introduced me without ceremony to the daughter's apartment, whom I entertained at her toilet; and, lest the facility of having such opportunities would render me less sensible of them, often disturbed us by coming to announce falsely the arrival of her mother.

When my confidant judged I was completely fettered, she proposed to me to marry Donna Helena de Melida, for so was this young lady called. This proposal put me on my guard of the landlady, whose system I then penetrated. She had boasted so much of the wealth and nobility of this virgin, I could not reasonably hope that any one would sacrifice her to a man who was totally unknown. I told my con-

fidant I had formed engagements elsewhere, which could not be broken. As soon as I had declared my sentiments on that head, the ladies changed their conduct with regard to me. They had hitherto refused all the presents the landlady offered on my part: they placed themselves on another footing. They resolved on plucking the bird, and had the address to draw some good feathers from his wing.

A new incident finished my cure: I one morning saw coming out of the Dominican church, where I was going to hear mass, a lady of majestic shape, and very richly dressed. I took her for a person of quality; and as she passed by me, if I durst not salute her, in recompence I looked upon her with so respectful an air, that I drew upon me her attention. She traversed my whole person with looks, with which I felt myself very much honoured; in Spain,

a look of that kind being considered a very great favour. I was curious to know who she was. Two waiting-maids and a footman walked behind her, which confirmed me in the opinion I entertained that she could be nothing less than a lady of rank. When she reached the middle of a large street, she stopped and went into a fine house. I did not doubt but this was her abode, and, after some informations, I discovered she was the daughter of Don Andrea, who assumed the title of Don in quality of being a banker of the court, and that this lady had the reputation of being very virtuous.

I was taken up with this rencounter for the rest of that day, and could not refrain towards evening from passing and repassing before the banker's windows. It was not labour in vain; for I saw the banker discoursing with his daughter in a balcony. He appeared

to me a man of very good mien. As for the lady, I may say without flattery she was a finished beauty: She had an agreeable air and easy manners, which prepossessed me very much in favour of her mental accomplishments. If I had been smitten with her in the morning, I was infinitely more so in the evening. I returned to my lodging, fully resolved to bring about an acquaintance with her father the day following. This I brought about in the following manner:—Since my arrival in Madrid, I had taken care to get my diamonds dismounted, and set in a different manner to what they were, lest, if perchance my relations should take it into their head to send a description of them to their correspondents, I might be arrested. I carried from ten to twelve thousand franks worth of jewels to the banker, to whom I said I had a more considerable amount at home. He

looked at them with all his eyes, and estimated them at twelve thousand livres, which he offered to pay me in six months, if I would let him traffic on them.

As I had no other intention than to enter into commerce with him, I accepted his offer, and generously refused his note, which he was going to pass me for their amount. I told him I knew too well what reputation he had in the world, to ask any other securities but his word. We then agreed that he should pay me six thousand franks in three months, and the other six three months after that. He was so charmed with my frankness and generosity, that he loaded me with compliments, and thanked me for the confidence I placed in his integrity. He shewed me all his house, which was richly furnished; I remarked there equipages for his daughter and himself, with a great number of

servants. All those objects threw powder into my eyes, and I made no difficulty to believe this banker must be the richest man in all Spain. He was a man whom the court made use of to send considerable remittances into foreign countries, and had free admittance into the houses of the ministers, to whom he spoke with unrestrained familiarity. The greatest noblemen were his friends, scarce one of whom but was obligated to him.

All this discourse, which they call in France gasconade, was not however without foundation. He had formerly been on this footing with the grandees of the court; but by the dint of obliging them, he so far ruined himself, that he supported his credit, which was yet somewhat respectable, only by precarious industry. My diamonds were a great assistance to him; he made use of them, to disengage himself from a

pecuniary embarrassment, wherein he gained by this seasonable supply half their intrinsic value, having seized the opportunity of disposing of them advantageously at the marriage of the Duke de Medina Sidonia's daughter. As I was then able to judge of his fortune only by appearances, I esteemed myself too happy to have formed an acquaintance with him. I accused myself in private for having such an unlimitted ambition, and for planning so rash a design of aspiring to his only daughter, who appeared to me a match worthy of a prince.

On the other hand, Don Andrea could not recover from the surprise my proceeding excited in him. For this reason, he commissioned a man of trust to learn from my hostess who I was, and after what manner I lived in Madrid. He got the most advantageous accounts of me; for though ignorant of my birth,

they did not hesitate to believe me a man of rank; and as for my conduct, I gave no reason to suspect that my propensities were immoral. By the good testimonies he received of my character, he took it into his head, I was the man, whom Heaven destined for his son-in-law. He spoke of it to his daughter, who told him I had followed her in the street from the Dominican Church to their house; that I was continually passing before their windows: in a word, that all my actions gave her sufficiently to understand I had views on her. He doubted no longer, that the confidence I had reposed in him, in abandoning to him my jewels without a note, was but an effect of the love I had for his daughter. They both rejoiced, whilst conferring together, and believing me richer than a Jew, they resolved upon managing me so, that it would be impossible for me to escape them.

Conformably to this deliberation, the banker paid me a visit at the inn. I was prepared for him, and had displayed to advantage in my chamber all my jewels, which made a very great impression on him. He was principally struck with my gold chain; he admired its workmanship, and told me if I designed to sell it, he would make gain upon it a third of what it cost me. I took him at his word, and resigned it to him, as I did my jewels, without any note or bond. He was transported with joy. He bestowed on me a thousand caresses, and looking on me already as his son-in-law, gave me advice how to draw a gross interest from what ready money I was possessed of. A few days after he brought me the amount he had promised for my chain, which augmented the confidence I had in him, and obliged me to acknowledge his trouble by a

present suitable to a young lady, which with his permission, I sent to his daughter.

These new amours cooled very much my domestic ones. I passed whole days from home, and when I returned at night, I generally entered my own chamber, and went to bed; or, when I could not shun the conversation of those ladies, I had with them interviews so very cool, they might easily understand I had shaken off their yoke. Helen proving that her favors, instead of irritating my ardor, only served to abate it, wept with spite. She held a grand council with her mother and the landlady on my change of conduct, which they failed not to attribute to some new engagement, and the result was to put my generosity to the test. Two young noblemen flush in money happened to lodge at our inn; they engaged me to play with them,

and I won at three sittings two hundred and fifty pistoles. This the ladies had no sooner learned, than they forced me to take a walk with them, whether I would or not. Returning home, we passed by an embroidery and silk-merchant's door. Our landlady, who was with us, wished to make me go in and purchase a suit of fancy-dress for Donna Helena, telling me so small a present from my late gains would be very trifling. I gave her a deaf ear; and waving her entreaties, deceived the expectation of those ladies, who had reckoned on giving my purse a copious bleeding.

I had a better use to make of my money. A new house happened to be built in that quarter which I was tempted to purchase, I consulted Don Andres thereupon, who approved of that acquisition. He interfered himself in the affair, and was the cause of my getting

a good bargain of the house. It cost me only three thousand ducats, which I paid down before him in *hard* money, and with an air as indifferent as if I had had an hundred thousand crowns in my strong box. He at once believed he had met with the son-in-law he wanted, and directed all his stratagems to make me fall into his net.

I politely took leave of my neighbours and addressed my hostess, in order to thank her for all her attention to me, and to assure her I would remember her civility to my latest breath. She answered my politeness in a flattering manner, and besought me the most obligingly in the world, to permit her to treat me to a dinner before I left her house. She caused three dishes to be served up, which she knew I was passionately fond of, but she reserved another for me, which was by no means to my taste. It was brought to me by

an alguazil of the court and six archers, with a warrant to apprehend me. At this apparition, which shook me to the centre, I did not doubt but my destruction was inevitable. All my relations stood before my affrighted fancy, and expected every moment to see some of them make their appearance. I got up from table without knowing what I did. I thought to dart through the door, but found it guarded by three archers. I gained afterwards a window with the design of saving myself that way, but was hindered by the three other archers. The alguazil, who was the most reasonable of his brotherhood, remarking the disorder I was in, approached me smiling, and said to me quite low, Signor Cavalier, take courage; you need not affright yourself so much. This affair wherein you are implicated, is but a trifle. You will get over it with honor for a few pistoles.

Here, added he, giving me the warrant, read it yourself; you will see how unseasonably you alarm yourself. I sat down with a trembling air, and traversing attentively the paper, read in it the name of Donna Helena de Melida. I began to breathe a little, and addressing the alguazil; What does this mean? said I to him. What! Is it that lady who has caused me to be arrested? What have I done to her? She pretends, replied he, still laughing, that you have obtained from her by force what her virtue refused your entreaties.

What do I hear! cried I, with extreme surprise. Could Helen have the effrontery to prove me guilty of such a crime? Why not, answered the alguazil; she may have her reasons to accuse you of having committed it. It is true she must prove it, and you will be permitted to make a defence. What is

more melancholy for you, the duty of my charge obliges me to conduct you to prison. Mr. Officer, said I, you appear to be a very honest man; consider, I beseech you, this unjust prosecution. I protest to you, that, very far from employing violence to arrive at the summit of my wishes, the fair Helen has met me more than half way. If you knew how much money I have spent ——I do not doubt it, interrupted he; I know but too well that nymph and her knave of a mother; they have lived those ten years back in Madrid, where they have followed no other business than that of cajoling young strangers. You are the third whom they have similarly snared, and, between us both, I think you will not be able to extricate yourself out of their paws, but at the expence of your purse. I think the same, replied I, and that there is no other way to terminate speedily, and

without noise, this cursed affair. I beseech you, added I, slipping privately into his hand a ring worth from twelve to fifteen pistoles, to interfere in accommodating this unlucky business. He put the ring on his finger, and answered me with the tone of an alguazil, that he would go and find those ladies, and, if they refused to desist from their prosecution against me, he would menace them with his attention to their conduct, which would not fail to render them reasonable.

In finishing these words, he left me in the parlour with his archers, who, making the points of their halberts dazzle my eyes, kept me in awe until his return. If Mrs. Doublescore, my landlady, whom I looked upon as the author of this knavery, had been present, I would have comforted myself a little by abusing her in such terms as she deserved; but, in order to shun

my reproaches, she had taken to her heels at the sight of those blood-hounds of justice. I was far from being easy in waiting the result of the conference, which was carrying on in the apartment of my antagonists. The alguazil, however, went roundly to work on this occasion; he compelled them to be satisfied with one hundred pistoles, twenty of which were for himself. I blessed my stars to have got off so cheaply. I quitted the inn never to return there again, and retired to my new house, very well satisfied that this adventure had not made the smallest noise.

CHAP. V.

Gusman courts the Banker's Daughter, and marries her.—After her Death he embraces an Ecclesiastical Life.

As soon as I got clear of Donna Helena, her mother, and my landlady, I

abandoned myself entirely to my new amour. I only now thought of becoming the son-in-law of Don Andrea, who, on his side, fearing I would embark in some commerce of gallantry, was as impatient to give me his daughter as I was to obtain her. I went the day following to the house of this banker, who kept me to dinner. About the end of the repast, my *supposed* appeared as if by chance: I stood up immediately to salute her, and testified to her the agreeable surprise her arrival caused in me. She answered my compliment with a modest air, and wished, at the same time, to retire. Her father stopped her: Eugenia, said he, stay with us. This gentleman is a friend of mine, and I am very glad to give him to understand so, by permitting you to entertain him here. I did not fail to thank him for so signal a favour, with which I appeared charmed, and to which, at bottom, I

was more sensible even than I appeared to be.

I entered, then, into conversation with Eugenia, and, to crown my joy, Don Andrea, under pretence of having some letters to read, withdrew to a corner of the room where we were, in order to leave us more at liberty. I then set all my engines to work, which forwarded me pretty well, whilst the lady enchanted me with the delicacy of her wit. During this time the father, aping the man of importance and unavoidable dispatch, asked pardon several times for being such bad company. I rendered him compliment for compliment, and, keeping still to the main point, continued my amorous appeal to his daughter in a low voice, from a seeming apprehension of disturbing his reading. Nearly three hours had already elapsed, when the banker, judging it proper to terminate our conversa-

tion, joined us again, and Eugenia, after making a genteel courtesy, withdrew.

I was so brimfull of esteem, or rather of love for the lady, that I exhausted myself in conferring encomiums on her, and, speaking from the abundance of my heart, told Don Andrea, that no one could be more enamoured than I was with his daughter. The old fox listened to me very attentively. He told me I had gained his heart by my gentlemanly deportment, and the confidence I had had in him; and that I might depend on it, there was nothing in the world he was not capable of doing to convince me of it. I discovered to him the bottom of my soul, (encouraged by his obliging expressions to break silence) and told him it was in his power to render me the happiest of mankind by granting me Eugenia. He paused, or seemed buried in thought for some moments, to make me suppose I put

his friendship to a very trying proof. He embraced me very tenderly when I was leaving him, and told me he had had certain views to establish his daughter advantageously, but that he would sacrifice them to me, to testify to what lengths his affection for me was carried. At these words I grasped one of his hands, and kissed it with a transport, which shewed him better than I could express the gratitude with which I was penetrated.

From the time of this conversation, he called me by no other name than *his son*. He interfered in all my affairs, advanced me, for the purpose of furnishing my house, the first six thousand franks he promised to pay me at the end of three months, and caused me to have, at a cheap rate, some magnificent articles of furniture, which a person, who had need of money, was under the necessity of selling. In short, I

dined every day with my future father-in-law, had full liberty to visit his daughter, and enjoyed all the privileges of a son-in-law, if you except *that* which the quality of husband alone could give me.

I pressed Don Andrea not to let me languish any longer in the expectation of being really his son-in-law; he yielded to my impatience, and our marriage was celebrated with splendour. My father-in-law reckoned me down the ten thousand franks he had promised. I made a present to my wife of the rest of my jewels. I gave her dresses of the greatest magnificence, and led her to my house, when our rejoicings lasted for fifteen days. I hired women and servants to attend her. In a word, I put myself in a situation of being ruined in a very short time, if I found not means by my industry to gain as much as I expended. The banker, indeed,

made me hope for mountains of gold. We purposed nothing less than to set the whole court and city in motion, and transact all the business of the kingdom.

Our partnership made at first a very great noise, owing to the care Don Andrea took to divulgate with a mysterious air, that he had chosen for his son-in-law a man who had immense riches. This report took wing, and brought us in plenty of customers. Every one came to us preferably to all the other bankers; and, if we had confined ourselves to trade with the merchants, we would have infallibly made an immense fortune. But the astonishing weak side my father-in-law had for persons of quality, hindered us from enriching ourselves. What he received in one hand, he gave out with the other. He was so infatuated with a count, a marquis, or a knight of St. James, he could refuse

them nothing, when they addressed him in terms of friendship to lend them money; and when I happened at any time to represent to him the extravagance of such proceedings, he always laughed, mocked me as if I had not common sense, and treated me as a man entirely raw in the affairs of the great world.

In the mean time, with all his experience, he dissipated our stock, and we were reduced to use every kind of means to establish some new funds. What did we not put in practice to bring this about! We intermeddled in buying and selling. We trucked, and lent at usury. There was no kind of trade we had not a hand in. The profits we made would have been sufficient to support us genteelly, if we had been capable to use even a little economy, and we should not have been obliged to embark in some knavish

dealings, which we sometimes had the greatest difficulty to conceal. If Don Andrea loved luxury and good cheer, his daughter still surpassed him in those particulars. She found nothing too rich or too handsome for her. We kept a grand table, twice as many servants as we had occasion for, and our house was never empty of relatives and friends, whom I was obliged to regale at great expence.

I did not, however, without extreme grief, see my Italian money melting away thus. I could not think on the consequences of my marriage without sighing in the bitterness of regret, for having been such a dolt as to marry at all. When I found that there was no longer any hopes of continuing on the respectable footing I had hitherto upheld, I addressed my father-in-law to ask his advice in so delicate a conjuncture.

It was on this occasion he made me see he was consummate in all kinds of tricks. You must act, said he, in this affair, as I have done in a similar case; that is, to save the residue of our property at our neighbours' expence. Then, without loss of time, he drew up acts of defeasance, deeds of conveyance, false contracts, and a great many other compositions of chicanery. He made me purchase a yearly income of five hundred ducats, which his brother possessed. When I say *purchase*, I mean to say in appearance, for my father-in-law and I had not so much money between us to shew the notary, that he might be able to prove we had paid for this income. It only cost us fifty crowns interest to borrow the purchase amount for one day, and the sale was concluded upon this scheme. Still, well catechised, I at the same time gave into the hands of the seller a writ-

ten indenture, in which I formally declared, that the above said income of five hundred ducats did not belong to me, and that it was really his property, to whose possession I surrendered it, as an inheritance to which I had no pretension. I was very well satisfied with these turns of juggling, because they were very advantageous to me. Moreover, I knew those schemes to be carried on without scruple in all mercantile cities, and deeds of defeasance in particular appeared to me a fine invention for commerce.

Thanks to my father-in-law, I saw myself secured in something handsome, in case Fortune turned totally against me, and being able now to traffick anew on the supposed money arising from those five hundred ducats of rent, I continued my usual course. Unfortunately for me, it could not possibly last long. Those deceived are unde-

ceived at last; besides, my wife squandering incessantly more than I gained, reduced me at length to the cruel necessity of falling under the weight of my embarrassments. Don Andrea was still lucky enough to keep himself out of the scrape. As for me, I could not shun the claws of a cursed catchpole, who arrested me at the suit of my creditors, and carried me off to prison; but they looked very foolish, when preparing to seize my effects, they found they were under cover from their gripe. I had, however, so much conscience left as not to let them lose all; I gave them the tenth of what was due to them, and promised to pay them the remainder in ten years. It is thus I drew myself out of their hands.

The haughty Eugenia, conceived such great displeasure at my imprisonment and bankruptcy, the whole shame of which she imagined fell on herself, that

no possible consolation was of any avail. She sickened and died of pure spite, and as she left no children, I was under the obligation of refunding her dowry. Having become a widower, I ceased not to live in good intelligence with Don Andrea. Our partnership of course was broken, and I paid him back his ten thousand franks without having the smallest dispute with him. Besides that, I could have gained nothing by tricking him; he was a man who was master of my affairs, and of whom I still stood in need.

After having paid the last duties to my wife, and her dowry to her father, I led the life of a recluse in my own house, which was nothing but naked walls, with the exception of one room, which Don Andrea suffered me to decorate with some old lumber of his own. There I employed myself in making reflections on the past, and pausing on the means of future subsistence.

Feeling myself disgusted with the world, I resolved to quit it, and turn my thoughts to the church; I shall be able to find in this sacred asylum, that solid happiness I have hitherto sought in vain. Many a rogue has made his fortune in taking the like resolution! I will try if it will be as favourable to me. Let the worst happen, I will be able to purchase some benefice by the sale of my house. From that moment I thought no more but of selling my house, which was soon done. I nearly got as much for it as it cost me. After having lodged in the bank the money which it brought me, I got an ecclesiastic dress made for me, which consisted of a cassock, a long mantle, and a Spanish cape.

Muffled up in this new dress, I bid adieu to Don Andrea, and set off for the city of Alcala, where I arrived before the opening of the schools. I was

not long without forming acquaintances, and had the good luck to meet with students as old as myself. I began by applying myself to the study of philosophy, and made a very great progress in it. I missed not a single lesson, and was wholly taken up with my scholastic duties. After having continued this course for two years, I took out my degree of Master of Arts. I then studied theology, with the design of passing Bachelor, and entering into holy orders afterwards. But what will appear a miracle to you is, that during the three or four years I lived after this manner, I never had the smallest commerce with the fair sex, even the most virtuous. I interdicted myself even the curiosity of looking at them.

Whilst waiting until I should be able to take orders, I began to live retired from all kinds of company, and, in order to live more regularly, to frequent

holy places. One day, which was very fine for walking, I left the city on a pilgrimage to St. Mary Du Val, an agreeable hermitage, about a quarter of a league off; I met on the road a great concourse of people, who undertook as well as I this little journey through devotion, and the chapel of the saint was so full when I arrived there, I knew not where to kneel down to pray. A lady who was but two or three paces from me, remarking my distress, readily withdrew a little backward, as if to invite me by that action to kneel near her. I was surprised, and felt grateful for the civility of a woman, who was to me a stranger, and to whom I believed myself to be the same. Notwithstanding the gravity which I affected, I could not refrain from fixing my eyes on a person so polite, and did not doubt in beholding the neatness of her dress, but she was a lady of rank.

She carefully concealed her face, letting me see only one of her eyes, which shot a glance at me that pierced my very heart. All over emotion I slipt behind this fair one, and wishing to testify my gratitude by some obliging expressions, whispered to her quite low: How dangerous is your politeness! I believe you have nothing to fear from it, answered she, in the same tone. I dared not reply to her, lest I should be heard by some women who were about her, and who appeared to be some of her company. I observed them all, and having particularly examined one, who was less studious to conceal herself than the rest, I discovered her to be the widow of Dr. Gracia, a professor of physic; she was a woman already superannuated, and kept boarders. I knew she had three daughters, who were by excellence, called the three *Graces*, on account of their

father's name, and who truly passed for charming girls. I did not doubt but the lady, to whom I had just spoken, was one of those three illustrious sisters, and as fame boasted particularly of the beauty of the eldest, as well as of her mental endowments, I earnestly wished it might be she. If scandal respect not girls reared up under the rigid rules of morality and virtue, how could it spare the three Graces, who were incessantly surrounded by gallants, by bucks of the first horns? They had learnt music, and their father, a man of pleasure, was more attached to render them qualified for society, than to form them to virtue.

I was well informed of all those circumstances, whilst they on their side were not ignorant who I was. They were told I knew music to the bottom, had plenty of money, together with a natural propensity to spend it. Those

good qualities, which they loved very much in a man, gave them a desire to know and engage me to increase the number of their lodgers. They artfully had this proposal made me, which I rejected from an apprehension of embarking in any new gallantry.

The ladies having finished their prayers, got up to depart. They were in number from seven to eight persons, all of the same company. They passed by me. I stood up immediately to salute them. She who occupied my mind, and was in fact the eldest of the three sisters, under pretence of adjusting her mantle, let me dexterously have a view of her face. I was struck dumb with amazement, and a few glances she favoured me with, finished my perplexity. In the mean time an emotion, which could only come from Heaven, restrained me at once, and gave me strength to resist so powerful

an attraction. I represented to myself at that moment the hazard I was running, and considered the abyss into which I was going to precipitate myself. I knelt down again to continue my prayers, or rather to begin them; for I had until then been so distracted, so moved, I could not possibly recite them with any propriety or attention. I could not even turn away my soul from the enchanting image that occupied it, and more agitated than a vessel without sail or rudder in the midst of a tempestuous sea, I yielded to the different emotions that gained an ascendency in my heart.

The inquietude, under which I laboured, not permitting me to continue any longer in the chapel, I left it, not with an intent of following the footsteps of that beauty, which had made such impressions on me; on the contrary, I wished to shun her, and fear-

ing to overtake her on the high-road leading to the city, I took another route. I turned my steps to the river's side, in hopes that in walking along its charming banks I should lose insensibly the remembrance of that formidable fair one, from whom all my philosophy would not be able to detach me. Perhaps I would have become tranquil again by means of those reflections, if my evil star had not conducted me to my destruction. A voice, which I heard at ten or twelve paces from me, made me turn my head to that side from whence it came, and the first object I saw was Donna Maria Gracia, the same lady whose charms I was so carefully shunning. It was she who was singing, seated on the flowery turf, whilst her sisters, and the other ladies of her company were spreading out near her a magnificent collation.

At this sight I was no longer master

of myself; I advanced towards them, and saluting them said: I confess, ladies, that fortune has been very favourable to me this day, since it will have me meet you every where I go; but in order to be perfectly happy, can I expect to be of your party? Donna Maria answered me smiling, You have at all events my vote. It is very fair that so many shepherdesses should have at least one shepherd to guard them from the wolves. This reply was more fuel to the flame, and engaged us in conversation. I approached the ladies, took off my cloak to be more at ease, and having made one of the party, abandoned myself without restraint to all the gaiety of my humour. Animated by the presence of my charmer, I shone in the conversation. I thought I never witnessed such happy moments. I repented for not having sooner sought the intimacy of so charming a family, and

for having shunned so many opportunities of it. The other ladies were also very graceful, so that all that was elegant or amiable at Alcala, I found collected in this smiling groupe. This I told them more than once. They were obliged to me, and in order to shew I barely did them justice, they disposed themselves after the collation was over, to form a concert. Two ladies took guitars, which they had brought with them, and Donna Maria, with some others who had good voices, accompanied them. A guitar was afterwards presented to me; they besought me to play some airs for dancing, which I did with abundance of pleasure, from the eager desire I had of seeing the nimble dances of those ladies, who appeared to my eyes in this meadow, as so many nymphs of Diana.

The eldest of the three sisters was Terpsichore herself; she challenged

all my looks. She had an air of nobility and grace, which distinguished her from her companions, No one will wonder, that a man, who took fire as easily as I, could not resist so many fine accomplishments. I became so passionately in love with Donna Maria, as to see no one else but her. When she had ceased dancing, I sat down at her feet, and giving the guitar, which I had, into her hand, requested she would play herself and sing at the same time. This she did not refuse, on condition I would accompany her.

We continued diverting ourselves in this manner until night. Then the widow of Doctor Gracia caused a retreat to be sounded, and we began to file off towards the city, in such a manner that Donna Maria and I brought up the rear; as if already in intelligence we both had affected to stay last for the purpose of private conversation.

When we had arrived at the *Widow Gracia's* door, she very civilly asked me in. I very readily complied. Some refreshments were laid before me. I staid there until common decency required I should take my leave of the company. Nevertheless, before I withdrew, I asked permission of the widow to come sometimes to assure her of my regards. At length I quitted Donna Maria. I was transported with love, and had my mind so troubled, that instead of returning to my lodging, I went straight to the university. I found not my mistake until I reached the gate, and was on the point of rapping for admittance. The day following I betook myself to the university-schools, where my distraction was such, I could not in coming out tell what subject was treated of within. After dinne I was irresistibly dragged by my foolish inclination to Donna Maria, whom I listened

more attentively to, than to my tutor in the morning, and who detached me so well from the university, that I renounced all idea of going there at all. I gave up now all thoughts of holy orders. I changed my ecclesiastical suit for a secular one of the richest fashion, and having paid my landlord, entered as boarder at the widow Gracia's house, or more properly speaking, I abandoned myself to the devil, who was dragging me away with him.

CHAP. VI.

Gusman marries again at Alcala.—Returns to Madrid with his new Spouse.—They were both driven from thence, and went to Seville, where he meets his Mother.—Consequences of that Meeting.

I LIVED deliciously with my new hostesses; I enjoyed good cheer; they prevented my smallest desires; they

sought but to please me in all things. In a word, I was man of the house. A life so voluptuous lasted three months, at the end of which I spoke of marriage. We soon agreed in preliminaries; and, to push my folly to downright extravagance, I laid out a vast deal of money in the purchase of wedding apparel, as well for the bride as her supposed. One would think I had crowns to reckon by the bushel; though, to tell the truth, I was figuring away with my last ducats. My mother-in-law, who, good woman, was easily dazzled by appearances, seeing all the fracas I was making, imagined I had such considerable riches, that the fortune of her other daughters was secured, and that a son-in-law such as I, would meliorate the affairs of her house. I pretended to have received letters from one of my friends, who told me that he had an opportunity of procuring me an honorable em-

ployment in Madrid, where I would not fail to make my fortune in a very few years. I imparted this news to my mother-in-law, who, taking it for gospel, was the first to advise me to accept of the employment, in spite of the regret she had to part with me.

This was not the only reason I had to quit Alcala. I had other good reasons for it: I saw myself running short of money, and did not like to appear thread-bare in a city where I was supposed to be a man of circumstances. Beside that, I saw with mortification that Donna Maria, since our marriage, had taken it into her head to renew acquaintance with certain scholars, whose tenderness she formerly had not disdained. What displeased me more was, that her gratitude to those gallants originated from the mean expectation of serenades and comfits. I was by no means satisfied with those multiplied

viands. I resolved, then, upon withdrawing myself from a place, where my spouse had such evil acquaintances, and to go settle at Madrid, where I might reckon on meeting with better customers for her.

Being prepared for our journey, we bid adieu to our friends and family, and betook ourselves, in good equipage, to Madrid, a city by just title called the refuge of the unfortunate. I had broken with Signor Don Andrea, my father-in-law, on account of my second marriage, which I had contracted contrary to his advice. We had therefore dropped all correspondence. With regard to my creditors, as I had still before me more than two years, I was pretty easy on that score. I hoped, before they would be at liberty to molest me, to make some good *hit*, either by my own industry, or that the beauty of my wife would put us in a situation to go settle

far from them in some solid establishment.

A poor devil of a merchant of Alicant w the first who fell into our nets. We met him on our route. He travelled with us, and for our sins, seeing Donna Maria, conceived for her a violent affection. We perceived it very well; for, having arrived at Madrid, he, if I may be allowed the expression, dragged us with him to his inn, where he assured us we would be well treated. The hostess, said he to us, is one of the best women in the world; she has elegant chambers, and, about two paces from her house, dwells a cook who will furnish us with every thing we shall want. We were not able to resist the importunate vivacity of his invitation, which already declared to us the honesty of his intention. We suffered ourselves to be persuaded and conducted to his inn. We were perfectly well received

there by the landlady, who, in fact, appeared to us a person of good character, and a great friend of the merchant's. She gave us the best chamber in her house, and offered civilly to render us service upon every occasion.

Our fellow traveller requested we would leave the care of ordering supper to him, and he acquitted himself as a man who had a long purse, and who desired to please. He spared nothing, during the repast, to gain my good graces. He paid more compliments to me than to my wife, perhaps because he believed me more opposite than her to his designs. After supper, I called for the bill, and was told all was paid. I was ravished at this promising beginning; but, to let him see I knew how to treat as well as he, I invited him to dine with me the day following. I sent for a cook, and ordered him to prepare a dainty repast for three persons. It is

true, I promised myself well that the merchant would pay the expence, and, for that purpose, as soon as we had dined, I went out, under pretence of having an affair of importance which called me to court, begging him to excuse me, and keep company with my wife until my return. That was just what he wished for, and I the same. Donna Maria, although naturally beautiful enough, had spent the whole morning in adjusting those charms she had been taught to borrow from art, so that she exhibited a splendid and dazzling appearance in the eyes of the poor merchant. She proposed play for amusement sake, and won a hundred good ducats, which, through gallantry, he suffered her to win.

This was only the beginning of his shaking; for, becoming more liberal according as he got deeper in love, he threw himself into frightful expense.

He made a present to my wife of several magnificent dresses, and a quantity of jewels. He carried her to the public walks and shows, and regaled her and me to an enormous amount. Donna Maria was naturally too grateful to pay all those favours with perfect ingratitude. We took an entire house to ourselves, to be at liberty to live as we pleased, and furnished it in fashionable style, at the expense of Don Diego, (for so the merchant was called). Oh! what a joyous life we led there! Good cheer, love and pleasure, took up their abode with us.

The merchant could not be better pleased than with his situation, and we were not less content with ours. Concord and peace reigned in our little family, until a young nobleman of Flanders, handsome, well made, and with a grand equipage, saw my wife at the play with Mr. Diego, and found her

so lovely, that he had a great mind for a closer acquaintance. He was not less anxious to know the man who accompanied her. The lady appeared to him a person of quality, as well by her dress as her noble air, and the merchant had a low, mechanical countenance, with a dress that gave no advantageous idea of his rank. He took Diego at first for the lady's servant; but Diego, having so familiar an air with her, made him suppose that he was her husband. In order to get at the truth, he caused them to be followed, after the comedy, by a lackey, who was well acquainted with intrigue, and this servant, having discovered all by his inquiries, gave his master a faithful detail of the whole. The noble Fleming, ravished to have cast his eyes upon a person of such good composition, flattered himself with the hopes of blowing up the trader, whose figure was so far inferior to his.

For the purpose of bringing this about, he had a private conference with our quondam landlady, whom he bought over by presents. This woman, from whom we separated on good terms, came sometimes to see us. One day, in a private conversation which she had with Donna Maria, she drew a flattering portrait of the Fleming, and spoke to her so home, that, unknown to Diego, she engaged her to take a walk, where this young gentleman met them as if by chance. Besides being beautiful beyond description, and excellently fair, he had an agreeable and insinuating disposition. My wife felt an immediate goût for him, and let him not languish long. This gallant did not, like Diego, testify his acknowledgments by watches of from ten to twelve pistoles value, or by dresses of little account; purses of a hundred doubloons, diamonds of the first water, superb suits of hangings, and

plate to a vast amount, spoke the strong language of his gratitude. As soon as we saw that this nobleman was showering down riches on us with full hands, we attached ourselves to him, and began to furiously neglect our citizen of Alicant: No more complaisance, no more attention for him.

Signor Diego began to grumble. His passion excited my wrath: I spoke to him as a man who would be master in his own house; in a word, I treated him so scurvily, and gave him to understand, that a little more impudence from him would compel me to teach him better manners. At the bottom, I owed him nothing; if he had spent a great deal in my house, I had given him acquittance.

I had three servants, and my wife two waiting maids. We lived as if the prosperity we then enjoyed was to last for ever. Our gallant took it into his head, for our sins and his own, to boast

of his good fortune to a count of his acquaintance, a young nobleman of the court, and to bring him with him to our place. This buck had no sooner seen Donna Maria, than he became the rival of the Fleming. They lived in good terms notwithstanding, for she had wit enough to keep both reconciled. But the count, wishing to associate in his pleasures two or three other petits-maitres, introduced them to our house, where those young libertines soon began to raise a violent uproar; night or day nothing was heard but laughing and singing; nothing was done but gaming and drinking. Although we drew daily a certain profit from their debaucheries, we squandered it away as fast as we gained it.

A life of such riot or disorder could not long fail of bringing some misfortune on us. Two of those young rakes, already disunited by jealousy, had a dis-

pute at play, which urged them to draw their swords: they fought, and, before they could be separated, one of them was mortally wounded. The parents of those young noblemen, having learned that this accident had happened in my house, which appeared to them a source of disorders, had me taken out of my bed, one fine morning, by a large troop of archers, who led me to prison, after having sported their talons in my house, and plundered my best effects.

This sudden irruption of justice awoke my wife abruptly, who got up and dressed herself immediately to go seek the chief of my judges, a most grave personage, and as respectable for his prudent deportment as venerable for his advanced age. She threw herself all in tears at his feet, and implored his protection by the most moving expressions. The old grey-beard, in spite of his wintry age, was less mollified by

the words of the fair petitioner, than warmed by the charms of her person. He raised her up, and in order to give her, said he, a particular audience, made her go with him into his closet, where seated by his side, she told her story to the greatest advantage ; whilst the old satyr, who was listening to her, wiped away her tears with a pocket handkerchief in one hand, and threw the other trembling with impotent lasciviousness, around her neck. He immediately sent to order the gaoler, from him, to treat me well. He desired her to call again the day following, at the same hour. This she was punctual to do. He waited for her in his closet, where she found him curled, powdered, and scented, with his beard cocked up. He promised I should be enlarged the day following ; and my wife was obliged to take the trouble of returning to his house, in order to receive from his hands the order of my enlargement.

I thought myself very happy to see myself so suddenly clear of this affair, though it was at the expense of half my effects. I flattered myself, that, under cover of so powerful a protector, we might continue our course of living with impunity. After dinner, I betook myself to his hotel, where I thanked him for his kindness. He received me with an air of affability, and signified to me that I would do him a pleasure to call sometimes to see and dine with him. I appeared very sensible of the honor conferred on me, and, in taking leave, besought him to continue to us his generous protection. He protested I might depend on him, and, in order to give me an assurance of it, honoured us that night with a visit. As he told us he loved music, my wife and I formed a small concert, which pleased him very much.

This superannuated gallant accus-

tomed himself by degrees to frequent every night a house where he was so well received. My presence was, however, an eye-sore to him; and, in order to remove me, he told me one day, on which he invited me to dine with him, that he could procure me an employment; that he knew one which would match me to a hair, wherein, if I were not the greatest *ninny* in the world, I would in a very short time make my fortune. Two days after he came to my house, and put into my hands a commission fully perfected, of Receiver of the King's Taxes, in signifying that I should the day following, at the farthest, set off to the district specified in my plenipotentiary *diploma*. Although I detested this employment, I accepted it. My wife was not less displeased; we, however, resolved in our private council, to try it for a while, and to endeavour during my absence, to make

old square-toes repair the loss of our Flemish gentleman. I separated then from Donna Maria, leaving the field clear to her old Adonis. I arrived at the place of my destination; but in tormenting the wretched, and offering them a thousand violences, one does not acquire the friendship of the public: in a word, my new trade was my aversion. I believe I would have taken it as a choice to stand the highway sooner than continue in this detestable employment. I therefore determined at the end of the three first months to get myself recalled. They were not as yet expired, when my patron wrote to me himself to return to Madrid. His letter gave me more joy, than I felt when he so charitably drew me from prison. I abandoned my post with a good heart, and returned to my protector, very curious to know why he got tired of my absence. I began by

going to see him when I arrived. He immediately complained of the coquetry of my wife: You have, said he, a woman, who has a great defect. She loves no one but young people.

I promised old grey-beard to employ all the authority I had over my wife, to live with more decorum and circumspection. After having made this promise, which gave no small satisfaction to old square-toes, I returned to my house, very well assured that my spouse on her side had another story to tell me; she launched out against him, calling him an old infamous miser, and saying she had not received from him since my departure, but frivolous presents.

I entered into the resentment she had for the avarice of this villainous and jealous dotard, and suffered more young bucks than ever to frequent my house; which when our magistrate remarked,

he reproached me bitterly for not having kept my word with him; and that I acknowledged very badly the benefits he conferred on me. I feigned some excuse, and still continued the old trade. He spoke to me a second time, complaining that in order to have private interviews with my wife, he was obliged to come to my house at hours, that endangered his health. I lost all patience at last, and in order to get rid of such an old scoundrel, gave orders that we were not at home.

As soon as he perceived, we sought to free ourselves from his tyranny, his love changed to hatred, and this passionate judge in his fury condemned us to quit Madrid in three days, under penalty of being confined the rest of our lives.

We disposed of our furniture the first day, and of all that would encumber us on our journey. The second

day we hired four mules, which were wanting to carry ourselves and our baggage, and the third day, very early in the morning, we departed without regret from a city, where, if we had continued much longer, we should have been obliged to sell off our merchandise under first cost.

We took the road to Seville, as well to satisfy the desire I had to see my native home, as to please Donna Maria, who, from the wonders she had heard me tell, longed to see them herself. I had, among other things, told her, that incessantly merchants were seen landing at Seville from Peru, laden with gold, silver, and precious stones. She burned with impatience to try her glances on those rich mortals, to fill her coffers with their spoils. In the mean time, whatever good design we had on them, we made easy journeys, for fear of fatiguing ourselves. I felt a

secret pleasure in considering the country, through which I had travelled, although it brought to my recollection the sad adventures of my youth. I knew again the inn where I was stable-boy, and in sight of Santellana, I thought, I still smelt the excellent ragoûts of mule-flesh, with which I was formerly regaled. I recollected also a few miles from that, the blows of a stick I received from the two archers of the Holy Hermandad. I dined even in the charming tavern, where people get chickens to eat in their omelets.—Finally, I stopt at that hermitage, which furnished me with a lodging the first night of my departure from Seville; and transported with a joy so tender as to draw tears from my eyes, I accosted the Saint in the following terms: "O Great Saint Lazarus, when I withdrew from the steps of your chapel, I had a tear in my eye, was on foot, and wretched,

you now see me again happy, flush in cash, and well mounted."

It was night when we reached the city. We dismounted at the first inn [illegible] met in going in. We were very badly lodged there; but the day following, having arisen very early to seek a more commodious lodging, I found one in the quarters of St. Bartholomew, where I caused all my effects to be carried. I asked afterwards in the city some news of my mother, and no one could tell me a syllable about her. This made me suppose her no longer among the living. Prepossessed by this opinion, which afflicted me, I returned very sadly to my lodging. I was however mistaken. The good woman was still living, and lived at Seville too. I learned that she lodged in our neighbourhood, with a young and beautiful person, who passed for her daughter. Good blood can tell no

lies. I no sooner knew the abode of my mother, than I flew there. I saw her, knew her again; we embraced with pure and unaffected affection.

We related mutually, and in a few words, what had happened to us since our separation, each of us taking care at the same time not to say a word, which we thought improper to communicate.

The vessels we expected to arrive from the Indies did not however come. Money became scarce, and of course the profits arising from her gallantries could be but very middling. Still it was necessary to keep up the same expense in our household, Donna Maria not being in a humour to listen to any proposal of economy. I was even obliged, in order to keep her in temper, to buy new dresses for her every day.

To crown my happiness, I formed an acquaintance with an Italian, the

captain of a Neapolitan galley. He had orders from the court to repair to Malaga, to carry the bishop of that city to Naples, and not having found that prelate ready to embark, he came whilst waiting to Seville, to seek some merchants who had merchandize of consequence to send to Italy, as is commonly the case. I met him by chance the second day after his arrival, in the house of a merchant, and as he spoke only Italian, not being able to explain himself in Spanish, though he understood it pretty well, I served them as interpreter in the conversation they had together. The officer was rejoiced to meet a person who spoke his language as well as himself, and formed so close an acquaintance with me, that he hardly left me at all. He possessed a good fund of wit, and was very agreeable in his person. I conducted him to my house, and introduced him to my

wife, who did not fail to charm him. It was not without pain he saw himself obliged to separate from Donna Maria; and I doubt whether he could remove himself from her, if he had not found means to reconcile his love with his duty, in engaging my *chaste* spouse to abandon me and follow him to Italy. This he did very well without an interpreter.

After all, I believe it was not difficult for him to determine her to do so; besides that my wife loved novelty, I am persuaded the captain, who carried her off, was not long in perceiving her propensity. Be it as it will, instead of running after her, and endeavouring to retake her, which I might easily do in going to Malaga, I built a golden bridge for my enemy, that is, I owed him the greatest obligations. He must be a fool indeed, that runs after an *eloping wife!*

CHAP. VII.

Gusman, after the Elopement of his Wife, continues some Time with his Mother.—By what Stratagem he became afterwards Steward to a Woman of Quality.—He is afterwards condemned to the Gallies.

I HAD the prudence to keep this affair secret, in order to shun the shame of unfeeling notoriety, without speaking of the *wipes* I should certainly get from the wits of the day. I sold off the residue of my property, which consisted of some moveables and apparel, which my *chaste* wife had not deigned to carry away with her. My mother accommodated herself as long as she could to the kind of life I was leading, Wearied out at length, she returned to the house, where she had left Petronilla, telling me she should live there more in repose, and at the bottom was fitter

than I to serve as a prop to her old age. I opposed not my mother's design, and we both separated without coming to any harsh expressions.

One will not be surprised if, in spending every day without gaining any thing, I found myself very soon reduced to my primitive indigence. I learned one day, that there was a rich widow, whose husband had died in the Indies, governor of a city there, where he had amassed great riches, which she possessed in Andalusia; that this lady, who was a devotee of the first order, had no children, and that her heirs were all persons of distinguished rank; that she had need of a steward or factotum, and was in fact looking out for a man of probity, knowing that those places were not always filled by *honest people*.

This place tempted my strong desire, and I resolved to spare nothing to come

at it. After having well cudgelled my brains in the invention of some stratagem which might bring it about, I stopt at this, which I am going to tell:—I discovered that this lady had, for a spiritual director, an old priest of the order of St. Dominick. I was told she did not transact the smallest affair without consulting this good divine, who had an absolute empire over her inclinations. That made me think of the means to surprise the esteem of his reverence, and it was in fact a sure way to arrive at my object. Behold the ground-work of my scheme. My mother had given me a handsome purse. I put eight pistoles, and twenty crowns of gold into it. I added to the amount a ring of little value, a gold seal, and a silver thimble, which my mother had made a present of to my wife, the day they first saw each other. After which I laid aside my sword, and put on a

simple and modest dress. I went, thus equipped, to the Dominican convent, where I asked to speak to the reverend father I have just mentioned. I entered it with a hypocritical air, and, addressing the monk without having the hardihood to look in his face, said to him, with a weak and mild voice, Most reverend father, I have just taken up this purse in the street, which appears to me to be full of gold or silver coin. Although I am but a poor man, I know very well I am not allowed to keep it; it is for this reason I have presumed to call on your reverence, to beseech you to dispose of it as you shall think proper.

The good father, at these words, stared with wonder at me, to consider me from head to foot, and, as charmed with my action as it would have appeared damnable to him, had he been able to penetiate my motive, praised

the delicacy of my conscience, principally on account of it being so rare among the indigent. He could not sufficiently admire me, and feeling at the same time an inclination to render me service, in order to recompense my virtue, questioned me respecting my situation and abilities, that he might ultimately know what I was capable of. My reverend father, said I, I have been for some time back in Seville, where I have got no employment. I have quitted the receipt of the taxes of Madrid, where I have been employed, and where I had rather contribute some of my own money, than resolve on persecuting the poor wretches, from whom I was to exact it. From receiver of taxes I became steward to a nobleman, whose affairs were very much embarrassed. Nevertheless, with the help of God, I would have brought about re-establishing them, if he had not spoiled

them according as I laboured to adjust them. At length, after having served him for four years with all the zeal and with all the fidelity I owed him, I left his house poorer than I entered it, and without having been paid my wages."

The reverend father put several questions to me, which I answered in a manner that astonished him. I had with him a conversation of two hours, and he appeared so pleased with me, that he testified both by his actions and expressions I had gained his friendship. Go, said he, in taking leave of me, I am to-morrow to preach in our church. I will there publish the purse you have found. Return here on Tuesday. I hope I will have some good place to offer you.

I repaired to my mother's. I have lost, said I, the purse you have given me, and in which are your ring, your seal, and Donna Maria's silver thimble,

together with eight pistoles and twenty crowns of gold, which constituted my whole property. Happily it has fallen into the hands of a Dominican father, who will publish it to-morrow in his church. You must go and reclaim it, as if belonging to yourself; I will not appear before this monk for certain reasons, which I will tell you another time. The monk employed the greatest part of his sermon in praising my disinterested action. He could not, said he, find language strong enough to speak the eulogium of a poor man, who, without any regard to his own misery, would not, by any means, appropriate the property of another. All the congregation would have willingly given me a share of their riches, and there were even some persons who brought to this good father some money for me. My mother proved herself the owner of the purse by specifying what it con-

tained, and when the monk had given it to her, she opened it in his presence, in order to take thereout two pistoles, which she put into his hands, beseeching him to give them as a mark of her gratitude to the honest man, who had so well observed the commandments of God. In order to follow exactly my instructions, she gave a pistole to his reverence to have masses said for the souls in purgatory.

My purse having then, after this manner, passed through two strange hands, returned into mine as it had left me, with the exception of three pistoles. Tuesday was no sooner arrived than I went to the Dominican, who received me with all the marks of sincere affection, My son, said he, a good old woman, to whom the purse you found belonged, has been here to reclaim it, and I have restored it to her. Here are two pistoles she has commissioned me to give

you, as a token of her thanks. I signified to the monk, that I made a scruple of accepting them, because I did but my duty in not keeping the property of another, and that I merited no recompence for that.

Afterwards this good Dominican told me he had an employment which he thought would peculiarly suit me: A steward is wanting by one of the most considerable ladies in Seville. You will be happy in that house, and gain there a genteel independence [for the rest of your days, if you faithfully perform your duty, which I have no doubt but you will. I have conceived so much esteem for you, that I have not hesitated to offer myself to be your bail. Then he charged me with a letter for the widow in question, telling me that he had spoken concerning me to that lady, and had prepared her to give me a favorable reception.

I went that very day to render her my first homages. She received me not as a boy who offered himself as a dependent, but as a person of merit, to whom, through deference, she would have given a lodging in her house. The reverend father had also taken care to regulate my wages and perquisites with her. My person and conversation pleased her infinitely, and she testified an impatience to see me invested with the care of her affairs, which were, she said, in great need of proper arrangement.

I had a very handsome apartment given me, and remarked with pleasure, that all the other servants looked on me as a steward that madam expected every one should respect. All her papers were confided to me, and I applied myself with so much ardour to the work, that I did more business in a fortnight than was expected from me in a year. My mistress, ravished to have made the acquisition of a man so expe-

ditious in business, no sooner saw the Dominican, than she thanked him anew. This caused an extreme joy in the good monk, who began again to praise me, and who believed me in fact a lad of integrity and virtue.

I was often obliged to recur personally to the lady for information on particular things. I joined the most respectful air in the world to manners full of affability and sweetness; and when her own interest forced me to contradict her, which sometimes happened, I rendered my contradictions agreeable to her by the flattering and delicate turns I knew how to season them with. We had regulated hours for us to converse on domestic affairs; it was usually in the morning, whilst she was at her toilet, and at night after supper. She came every day after dinner into my closet, sometimes under one pretext, sometimes under ano-

ther, and to pass there whole hours talking to me upon every other subject, but what concerned the administration of her revenues. She carried the affair so far, that I at length knew her good intentions towards me. I feigned a long time not to see into her designs; but at length she told me, in order to excuse her weakness, that her design was to marry me privately. I gave myself up to my good fortune, and would certainly have drawn great advantages from it, if I had had prudence enough to preserve it.

As soon as I saw myself beloved by my mistress, and considered by the servants as the person who caused rain and sunshine in the house, I began to act another part: I became absolute master; I bought rich clothes; I lavished immense sums, and, to crown my extravagance, took in an under steward, whom I charged with all the embarrassments of my employment.

Her relations knew her to be a fragile vessel, and looked to her succession; they observed exactly her proceedings and mine; they had not looked on me with a very favourable eye from the first moment I entered her service. They mistrusted my devout air, and were greatly alarmed when they learned from the people of the house that I ruled the roast there at my pleasure. That made them think strange things. They knew not who I was, and, believing me not married, they were dying with fear, that the tender widow would make me take the place of the deceased governor, if it were not a matter already done. This apprehension seemed to them so much the better founded, because their relative had, some years before, contracted a clandestine marriage with one of my predecessors, who, by good luck for the heirs of this lady, died shortly after. I disturbed, then,

those gentlemen, who held among themselves several councils, to deliberate on the most prompt and efficacious means to make me quit my grasp. They would, however, have lost their pains, if I had not destroyed myself in the mind of my mistress, by an indiscretion I am going to relate.

The commerce I had with her, became every day less lively on my side, for two reasons; the first was, I possessed her without fear and without desire; and the second, because the lady was not in herself very attracting. I found one of her maids very handsome. She was a girl between sixteen and seventeen years, made to a miracle, brisk, bouncing, and a coquette into the bargain. I know not which of us made the first advances, for we both felt all at once an inclination for each other, and testified it at the same time. There were some other women in the house;

but it is not possible, that sooner or later the most secret intelligence will not be discovered. Celia, (for so this abigail was called) began to deck herself with jewels, and to shew money. Her companions, through jealousy, informed their mistress of it, who ordered them to watch the girl closely, and to neglect nothing to come at the real cause of a novelty, that seemed to her so very suspicious. The widow was but too well obeyed. They spied, they examined, they dogged us so closely, they soon found out, that Celia and I had frequently nocturnal interviews. What a dagger-thrust to my patroness! The more she was prepossessed in favour of my fidelity, the more sensibly she felt this grating intelligence. She could not believe me capable of such perfidy, and wished to know the certainty before she would give full scope to her vengeance.

I lay in a chamber which communicated with her's by a small closet, where there was a small door covered with tapestry. Another circumstance I was ignorant of; there was an old opening in the wall of this closet, which answered to the head of my bed, so that it was easy to hear through this, every syllable I uttered in my room, and particularly when I was in bed. This fatal aperture was the cause of my ruin. The widow came one night to this place, where lending an attentive ear to the conversation I had then with Celia, she heard us distinctly composing her eulogium, in terms the most mortifying for her. We held a severe examination on the defects that each of us remarked in her. In a word, we turned her from head to foot into ridicule. One may easily imagine the rage with which she was seized, when she heard us draw such an elegant portrait of her person.

She employed the rest of this unfortunate night in meditating revenge. It was no sooner day, than she sent for her nearest relation, to tell him I was an arrant knave; that I was not satisfied with robbing, pillaging, and putting her affairs in disorder, but that I added to the unfaithful administration of her property, the audacious insolence of dishonouring her house. In a word, that she would deliver me up to the just resentment which he ought to have for my knaveries, and that he had nothing to do but to make me undergo the rigour of the laws. She could not charge with this commission a man more proper to execute it than this relative, who expecting one day to be her universal legatee, had more interest than any one else to remove me from the testatrix.

He saw clearly it was through jealousy she had taken this resolution, and

used such great dispatch, that he obtained in less than two hours a warrant against me; so that I was not as yet out of bed, when an alguazil and six archers came to pin me in my chamber, and dragged me off to prison.

I learned not until two hours after, the reason of my imprisonment. I was not excessively afflicted, as I supposed my mistress loved me too much to abandon me to the severity of the laws, and expected every moment that some one from her would announce to me, that being no longer irritated against me, she had obtained my enlargement from the judges. Thus I bore without impatience, and without grief, the irons that love, as I thought, was preparing to break; and I looked on myself rather as a lover punished for his infidelity, than as a steward imprisoned for his misdeeds. I however flattered myself with vain hopes. I was made

give an account of my stewardship, which lasted two years. It was then I was seized with the gripes. The dissipation I had made of the widow's property, which I had disposed of, as if it had been my own, left such a mighty void between the receipt and expenditure, that I would defy all the stewards of great houses to fill it up. In vain I cudgelled my brains to invent imperious causes of laying out her money, to imitate apothecaries' bills; all my rebates and discounts were of no avail; I was short of the enormous sum of four thousand crowns. To complete my ruin, and sink me to the lowest depths of arithmetical perdition, the honest man, to whom I confided the weight of the business, whilst I was thinking only of my pleasures, no sooner saw me in the hands of justice, than he, in order to escape the same fate, which he merited not less than I, disappeared with all the

ready money which he could carry away. Behold me responsible for his conduct, and charged with all the iniquity. How could I draw myself out of this dilemma with impunity? I had neither property nor bail; and the party, with whom I had to do, was so powerful, that I could not flatter myself with getting out of prison, but by going to serve the king on sea.

I was so persuaded of that or some such thing nearly approaching it, that I made an attempt to escape from prison in woman's clothes. I had already passed through two doors, and was on the point of gliding into the street, when a cursed one-eyed turnkey, who was there, knew me. I carried a dagger under my robe, which I drew out in order to intimidate him, but he cried out. He had assistance immediately, and I was again immured in a gloomy dungeon, from whence I was not to

stir until conducted to the galleys, to which I was condemned only for the rest of my life.

CHAP. VIII.

Gusman is led to Port St. Mary with other honest People like himself.—His Adventures on the Road, and on Board the Galleys.

The chain composed of twenty-six young galley-slaves, all invested with the collar of their order, being ready to march, we departed from Seville for Port St. Mary, where the galleys then were. We were divided into four bands, all chained one to another; and our conductor escorted by twenty soldiers, led us on by short marches. The first day we lay at Cabeças, a village three leagues distant from Seville. The day following, at day-break, being on the road again, we met a young lad, who was driving some small pigs before

him. This poor wretch, instead of making his *cattle* take another route, in order to shun us, had the imprudence to drive them through our ranks, so that we whipped up the half of them. In vain he complained to our conductor, and besought him to interpose his authority to compel us to restore his pigs; the conductor, who supposed he would eat a good part of them himself, gave a deaf ear to his entreaties. We continued our journey, applauding ourselves for the lucky hit we had made. We were as joyous as if our liberty was attached to this last act of knavery. When we had arrived at the inn, where we stopped to dine, I made a present of my pig to our conductor, which he willingly accepted, testifying at the same time that I had gained his good-will. He immediately asked the inn-keeper and his wife, if they would dress this game for him. These honest people

gave him to understand that he could not apply to worse cooks than them. Upon which I told him, if he would unchain me for an hour only, I would serve him as cook, and was persuaded he would be well pleased with my knowledge of cookery. He did not hesitate to put me in a way of proving it, and I prepared for him a meal, which gave him infinite satisfaction. This caused him during our march to treat me more kindly than all the rest.

I gave another specimen of my trade in that inn, where there were two merchants then at dinner. Seeing us all there helter-skelter with them, they felt great uneasinsss for their merchandizes. One of them particularly lost not sight of his own, and had placed under the table his valise, upon which he supported his feet. I slipt cunningly under his chair, feeling myself furiously tempted to trick this fellow,

and cutting with a sharp knife his valise, I drew out two parcels, which I thrust into my breeches, and which I afterwards dexterously charged one of my comrades with, named Soto, with whom I had formed an acquaintance in prison. When the chain was out of the inn again, and had travelled about a quarter of a league, I asked Soto to give me the packets, to see what was our booty, and to share them fraternally between us. Soto said he knew not what I was speaking of. I thought at first he wished to have a joke, but that was the least of his thoughts. I became serious, and reproached his ingratitude and treachery. He mocked my reproaches and threats, and unalterably kept possession of the parcels. I resolved on being revenged, and to declare the whole affair to the conductor, choosing rather that he should profit of my larceny than Soto. This I

did not fail to do as soon as we reached the next inn, where we were to sleep.

I had no sooner related the fact to the conductor, than he caused Soto to be called, in order to demand the two parcels from him. The knave answered with effrontery that he had them not, and that I was a great thief to accuse him of the like. So you will not give them up with a good grace, Mr. Soto, cried the conductor; very well, my friend, I will have you treated as you deserve: at the same time he ordered the guards to prepare a cat-o'-nine-tails. Soto grew pale with fright at this cruel order, and trembling for his hide, avowed like a coward, that the packets were hidden in the belly of his pig, for he had one too. They were in fact found there, and when they were opened, several chaplets and bracelets of coral, garnished with gold and well-designed were seen. Our conductor,

as a man who perfectly understood his business, thrust them without ceremony into his pockets, promising me a recompence, which I still expect to this day. This proves very well that those knaves of power, profit of the evil actions of robbers, without sharing in their chastisement. From that very day, Soto and I swore an eternal hatred against each other.

We continued our march and arrived at Port St. Mary, where we found six galleys fitting out for a cruise. We were suffered to rest ourselves a few days in prison, after which we were divided into six bands. I was unfortunate enough to belong to the one wherein honest Soto was, and of course condemned to live with him in the same galley. We were put on board, and I was stationed before the main-mast. This grieved me extremely, because I saw Soto was placed at the master's

bench, so as to be very near me. They gave us two shirts, an old soldier's coat, two linen drawers, a red waistcoat, a bonnet of the same colour, and a great coat. After that the barber came to shave us from head to chin.

As the mate of a galley is an officer who has great power over the slaves, and who generally exercises it with a great deal of brutality, I thought my design would be well accomplished, if I could gain his friendship. He slept and eat near me. I was ready to render him every little service in my power, and never missed an opportunity that offered of obliging him. I served him at table, made his bed, and brushed his clothes; I was always on the watch to prevent his wants, and testify my zeal. All those pains and cares were not without their recompence. I soon perceived he looked on me with an eye disarmed of that terrible ferocity, which

causes a whole miserable crew to tremble. This appeared to me a peculiar favour; so, in order to render myself more worthy of his regards, I redoubled my attention to please him, and succeeded so well, that he would employ no one else to attend him. To attach me still more to him, he had me removed from the benches to charge me with the management of his household, and, above all, to cook for him, being very well pleased with some ragoûts which I had already prepared for him. I was not a little proud of this distinction, and had every reason to be so, because, by this happy change, I became exempt from every function of a galley-slave.

Our galley was under orders to sail for Cadiz, to bring masts, sail-yards, sails, pitch, tar, &c. Though I was not obliged to put my hand to an oar, still I did like the rest: I rowed the whole day; but, night coming on, I felt

myself so fatigued with a labour so painful and new to me, that after having attended my master to bed, I stretched myself on my great coat, where I soon fell asleep. My sleep was so profound, that two of my comrades robbed me without awaking me. They took from me some crowns which I had sewed in my waistcoat. I perceived it when I awoke. I made my complaint to the mate, who caused them to be restored to me by some good blows of a hoop. After that he advised me, in order to free me from all the uneasiness that the keeping of my treasure might occasion, to employ it in merchandises, upon which I might gain something in selling them again. I followed his advice, and continuing all my endeavours to please my master, who had so great a liking for me, I may say I led a happy life, though being condemned to the galleys.

During these transactions, a young nobleman, the relative of our captain, and knight of the order of St. James, having a design of commencing his caravans, came with his baggage to occupy a place on board our galley. He wore, according to the fashion of that time, a gold chain around his neck. He was one morning pilfered of eighteen links of this chain. His servants were instantly suspected of the theft, which by fair means they were first demanded to acknowledge. When mildness was of no avail, the hoop * went again to work. The captain, who knew his own servants to be first-rate knaves, capable of any kind of theft, had the same punishment inflicted on them. All that was useless; the links were not found. Upon which the captain said ot him, My nephew, you must be attended by a slave, who shall take care

* An instrument made use of to punish the galley-slaves.

of you, and be responsible for your effects. If you happen to lose the smallest article, he shall be soundly banged for it. The knight signified he would be very glad to have one fit to attend him. No more was wanting but to know which of the galley-slaves would have this high honour conferred on him. Several persons on board boasted of my address and wit, so that his choice fell on me. Thereupon the captain sent for my officer, and asked him if he were pleased with me. The officer, not knowing why this question was put to him, spoke in the highest terms of my merit, and praised me so much, that the knight, from that moment, resolved on selecting me. I was summoned, and pleased this nobleman, who, appointing me for his service, took me from the mate, by whom I was very much regretted.

In order to render me more free, and

to put me in a state to attend him with more ease, he obtained of the captain that I should only have the ring on my foot. He gave me in charge his clothes, jewels, and plate. I was desired, when taking them into my care, to be faithful and vigilant. I arranged immediately the effects of my new master, so that, in one glance, I could see them all. Express orders were given his servants not to enter his chamber when I was not there. This obviated a great deal of vigilance, which was absolutely necessary, where those knaves were far superior to any galley-slaves for pilfering.

I attached myself to study the humour and genius of the knight, and was not long in gaining his esteem. He consulted me sometimes on his most important affairs. Having one day a clouded and meditative air, My friend, said he to me, one of my uncles has written to me a letter which at once

grieves and embarrasses me; he wishes me to marry; he presses me to it, if I wish to inherit his property. He is a man who has waxed old in the fat indolence of the court, without having been ever able to resolve on undergoing the yoke he wishes to harness me to. I know not what civil apology I can make him; I feel no propensity to this marriage. Sir, said I merrily, if I were in your place, I would tell him nothing in the world would give me greater pleasure than to marry, provided it was to one of his daughters. My master burst into a fit of laughter at this shrewd remark, and told me he would make use of me to disengage himself from the importunities of his uncle.

However, with all my vigilance, I was at length the dupe of Soto's malice. At the instigation of this scoundrel, one of the knight's servants dexterously purloined a silver plate, and hid it

under my bed, between two boards, in such a manner that no one could perceive it. I soon found it was missing. I told my master with an air that ought to persuade him it had been stolen from me; I, however, was not believed. A general search was made; it was at length discovered where it lay concealed. The captain, then, judging I was the thief, notwithstanding all I could alledge in my defence, condemned me to fifty blows of the lath. My master was moved with the grief I exhibited in my countenance, when I heard this cruel sentence pronounced, and, opposing the execution of it, obtained my pardon, on condition that if I happened a second time to lose any thing, I should pay for the whole together.

As I saw by this adventure I had secret enemies, who were underhand labouring for my destruction, I humbly supplicated the captain and my master to give my employment to some

other. The knight expounded my entreaty to my disadvantage; he thought I only wished to quit his service to return to that of the first mate. He was incensed against me, and, in order to mortify me, refused what I demanded. I was obliged then to determine on continuing to serve him, and to keep myself, night and day, on my guard. This I did for some time with so much success, that I defeated all the address of those traitors conspired against me; but it was not possible I could be always so happy as to parry the treacherous stabs of those dark assassins. One night my master having returned from the city, wished to undress himself. I gave him his cap and dressing-gown, and whilst I was carrying from one chamber to another his sword, gloves, and hat, the band of the latter was stolen from me. I know not how so subtle a trick was played on me, I have

never been able to conceive it since. The day following, when I took his hat to brush it, I missed the band. At this sight I became as pale as death. I searched every where; useless labour! I only found there were knaves on board more crafty than myself.

What could I do? I thought I could take no better steps than to implore the mercy of the knight. I imagined that, instead of making me suffer the rude chastisement he had promised me, he would enter into my grief, and have still the goodness to demand pardon for me: It was a false hope I flattered myself with. When I told my master the new misfortune which happened me, in vain did I implore with the most pathetic expressions, and represent to him the malignity of my enemies, whose work I assured him the loss of the hat-band was. He only mocked me; Gusman, said he, with a tone of raillery, I am persuaded you are a lad

full of integrity, although you have not altogether that reputation on board, and that I have been often told I was very inconsiderate to place so much confidence in you. Once more, I believe you are a very honest man, and am sorry to tell you, that if you find not my hat-band, you shall be delivered over to the second mate, who will treat you as a lad of distinction. Upon this you may depend, notwithstanding all the assurances you have given me of your fidelity.

The captain, one of the most violent of men, arrived at the same moment. As soon as he learned the subject of our conference, and that he saw I persisted in denying any knowledge of the band, he fell into the greatest passion, and caused me to be so cruelly beaten, that I remained half dead on the spot. The barbarian would have had me put to death, if he was not in dread of being obliged, as is commonly the cus-

tom in such a case, to replace me at his own expense by another man, or to pay the usual tax for a galley-slave. To crown my misery, I was driven from the poop, and sent to the last bench of the prow, which is the most annoying and laborious place in the whole galley.

I recovered at length my strength by degrees. I even already began to perform on the sea, where we then were, the rude function of a rower, when Heaven, satisfied with those sufferings I had unjustly endured, had pity on me, and thought proper to extricate me from the dreadful situation I was then in. Behold the introduction to my enlargement. Soto, who meditated a great design, which he could not execute without the assistance of a man in my post, that is to say, near the powder-room, took it into his head to be reconciled with me. He made use for this effect of the mediation of a Turk, who had *li-*

berty to go from one end to the other of the galley. Soto reasonably supposed me very much irritated against the captain, and did not doubt but I loved as much as another to see myself at liberty. He besought me, through the interference of the Turk, to forget what was passed, and to render him my friendship, which he confessed he had unjustly forfeited. I signified that I desired nothing better than to renew it with him. Upon which the Turk spoke to me in these terms:

" Soto has charged me to communicate to you the project he has courageously formed to deliver us all. When we shall be near the coast of Barbary, where we are going, and from which we are not now very far, we will begin with killing the captain, afterwards the other officers and soldiers, in crying liberty! liberty! The slaves will immediately rise. We will render ourselves masters of the galley, and

seek an asylum among the Turks. All we require of you is, to set fire to the powder, if you see us prove the weaker party. Such is our plot."

I told the Turk he had reason to presume there was nothing I was not capable of doing to be revenged on the captain, and that he might assure the conspirators of my readiness to attach myself to them. I had, however, a different thought. When I saw the day approach for the execution of their project, I requested an immediate interview with the captain, on an affair on which his life depended. He had me then called, and I discovered all. I pointed out the place where the arms were concealed, and named the principal authors of the conspiracy, at the head of which I did not forget to place my good friend Soto, to whom I believed I was indebted for the blows of the lash I received with so little justice.

The captain, after having heard my

report, which he did not judge unworthy of his attention, put very prudently all his soldiers under arms along the galley. Having by these means rendered himself master of the conspirators, he began by causing those places to be searched where the arms were hidden. He found them there, and not doubting any longer of the conspiracy, ordered the heads of it to be seized, from whom the rack soon extorted an ample confession. Soto was made four quarters of by four galleys, to each of which a limb was fastened, as was also one of his comrades. The rest were decimated, two of whom were hanged*, and the noses cut off all the others. Soto, before his death, confessed it was he who had advised the concealment of the plate, and the theft of the knight's hat-band.

When the conspirators were all punished, the captain praised my zeal and fidelity. He could not sufficiently

admire the generous sentiment that made me sacrifice the pleasure of revenge to the service of the king. He afterwards asked pardon publicly for his injustice, and having himself struck off my chains, told me I was free, and that I might leave the galley as soon as he received an answer to the letter he was going to send to court to obtain my pardon. He wrote indeed in my favour, and had his letter signed by all the officers, who were glad to testify to me by that, how gratefully they felt the obligation I had rendered them. I returned a thousand thanks to Heaven for having furnished me with an opportunity to get out of the deplorable situation my wild conduct had reduced me to, and solemnly promised to lead for the future a more regular life.

THE END.

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